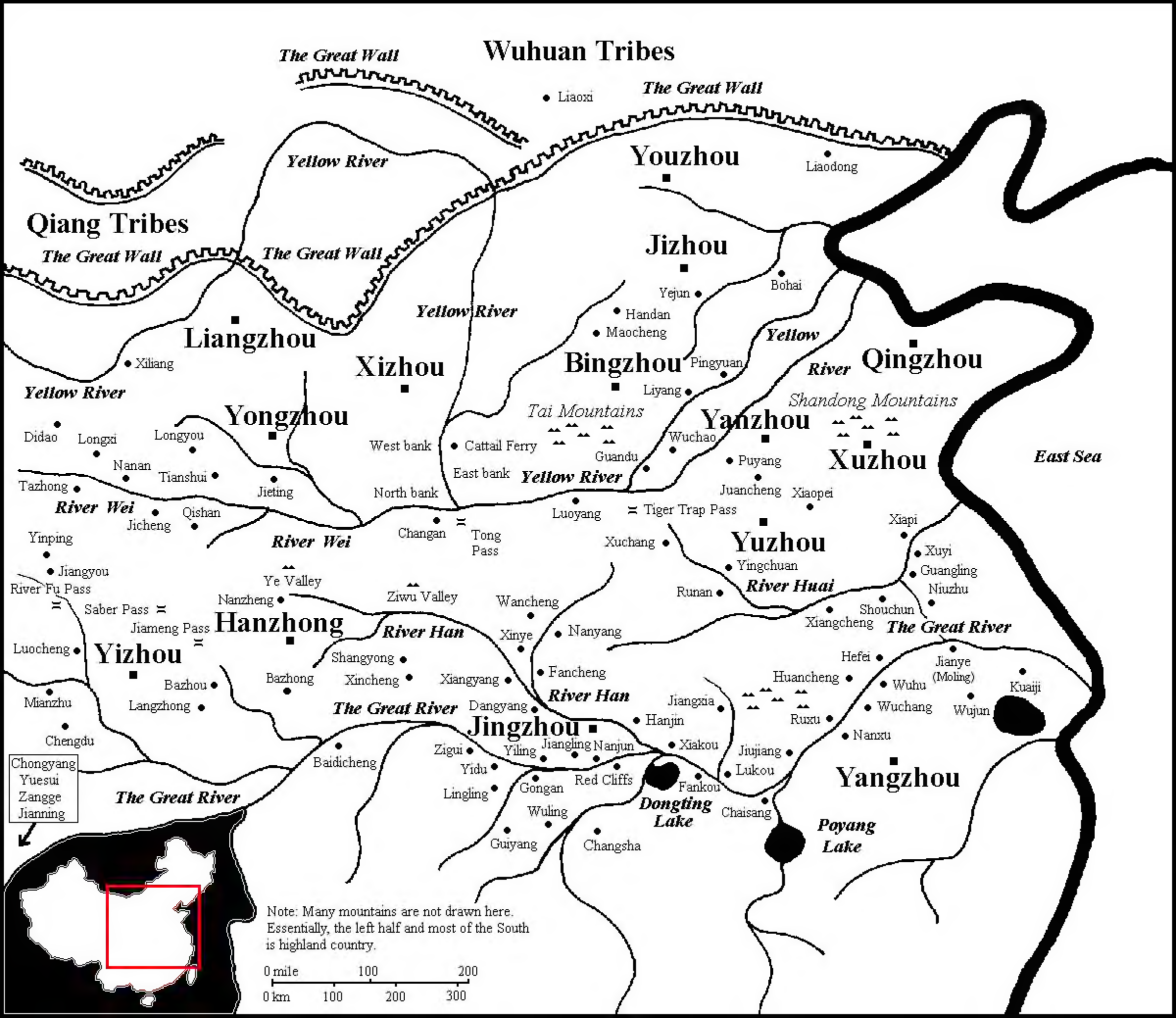

Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

三国志 11

孫策の快進撃

横山光輝

希望コミックス 43

CHARACTERS OF SANGOKUSHI
PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:

THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE SUPPRESSES ANOTHER REBELLION, EARNING HIM MANY TALENTED MEN AND MANY SOLDIERS. HE IS CURRENTLY THE GOVERNOR OF YANZHOU BUT IS FIGHTING LU BU WHO TRIES TO TAKE OVER HIS TERRITORY.

CONSORT HE:

HE JIN'S YOUNGER SISTER. ORIGINALLY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED BY LI RU.

DIAN WEI:

CAO CAO'S FIERCE GENERAL RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "E LAI," A MIGHTY GENERAL WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU.

DIAO CHAN:

A SLAVE GIRL BELONGING TO WANG YUN, BUT HE RAISED THE GIRL MORE OF AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. IN VOLUME 7, SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO. SHE KILLED HERSELF AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL IN VOLUME 8.

DONG CHENG:

A TRUSTED RETAINER OF EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 9, HE HELPS THE EMPEROR ESCAPE FROM LI JUE AND GUO SI.

DONG ZHUO:

GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZES CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATS HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. HE IS DEPICTED AS SADISTIC, CORRUPT, AND RUTHLESS TYRANT. HE WAS KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GONGSUN ZAN:

GOVERNOR OF BEIPING WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. HE WAGED WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKED HIM AND KILLED HIS YOUNGER BROTHER BUT HAS SINCE MADE PEACE WITH YUAN SHAO.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:

SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

HE JIN:

OLDER BROTHER OF CONSORT HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. HE ATTEMPTS TO THE TEN ATTENDANTS BUT IS DISSUADED BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER ASSASSINATED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

LIU BEI XUANDE:

THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. HE IS A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI. AS OF VOLUME 8, HE HAS BECOME THE GOVERNOR OF PINGYUAN.

LIU BIAO:

THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU WHO, ALONG WITH YUAN SHAO, TRIED TO KILL SUN JIAN TO RECOVER THE STOLEN IMPERIAL SEAL. HE SUCCESSFULLY THWARTED SUN JIAN'S ATTEMPTS TO TAKE JINGZHOU.

LU BU:

HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR IN THE LAND WHO RIDES ON THE FASTEST HORSE IN THE LAND, THE RED HARE. AS OF VOLUME 8, HE HAS BETRAYED HIS FORMER LORD AND FOSTER-FATHER, DONG ZHUO, BUT IS LEFT WITHOUT A TERRITORY OF HIS OWN. HE ATTEMPTS TO TAKE YANZHOU FROM CAO CAO.

SUN JIAN:

BORN IN WU COMMANDERY AND WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. HE PARTICIPATED IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO IN VOLUME 5. WHEN HE FOUND THE IMPERIAL SEAL, HIS ALLIES YUAN SHAO AND LIU BIAO ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIM TO RETRIEVE THE SEAL. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIED TO EXACT HIS REVENGE BY ATTACKING LIU BIAO BUT WAS KILLED IN BATTLE.

SUN CE:

ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. PARTICIPATED IN HIS FATHER'S CAMPAIGN TO INVADE JINGZHOU.

SUN QUAN:

YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE.

TAISHI CI:

SUN CE'S TRUSTED GENERAL. FORMERLY LIU YAO'S SUBORDINATE BUT LATER SWITCHED SIDES TO BECOME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER HE WAS CAPTURED.

TEN ATTENDANTS:

A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:

AN OLD MAN WHO HOLDS THE POST OF MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN HAN. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL. HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY WHO INVADE CHANG'AN (UNSHOWN IN MANGA)

WEN CHOU:

HE AND YAN LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS.

YAN LIANG:

HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS.

XU CHU:

FORMERLY A PEASANT, HIS TALENTS WERE NOTICED BY CAO CAO WHO THEN TURNED HIM INTO ONE OF HIS SUBORDINATES. HE IS NOW A GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

YUAN SHAO:

ORIGINALLY AN ADVISOR TO HE JIN, HE LEFT THE CAPITAL AND BECAME THE GOVERNOR OF BOHAI COMMANDERY WHEN DONG ZHUO CAME TO RULE OVER LUOYANG. HE HEADED THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO AND TRIED TO KILL HIS ALLY SUN JIAN IN ORDER TO RECOVER THE STOLEN IMPERIAL SEAL.

YUAN SHU:

YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. HE ASKS SUN JIAN TO HELP HIM ATTACK LIU BIAO AND HIS OLDER BROTHER IN VOLUME 7.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:

A FIERCE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:

A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO BUT HE IS NOW UNDER GONGSUN ZAN'S SERVICE. HE WISHES TO BE LIU BEI'S RETAINER, HOWEVER.

CHARACTERS OF SANGOKUSHI

PART 2: MINOR CHARACTERS

CAO HONG:

A GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO WHO IS ALSO HIS COUSIN. HE SAVED CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH IN VOLUME 6.

CAO SONG:

CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE WAS KILLED BY ZHANG KAI, AN ESCORT SENT BY TAO QIAN, WHO WANTED TO STEAL HIS FORTUNES.

CHENG GONG:

A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH CAO CAO AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HE REGRETS HIS DECISION AFTER REALIZING CAO CAO'S CHARACTER. *IN THE ORIGINAL NOVEL, HE DEFECTS TO BECOME LU BU'S ADVISOR.

DING YUAN:

GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN. HE WAS KILLED BY LU BU.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:

FORMER EMPEROR LING'S MOTHER AND EMPEROR XIAN'S GRANDMOTHER. IN VOLUME 3, CONSORT HE ORDERED FOR HER DEATH IN ORDER TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S SEAT AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:

ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS.

GUO SI:

A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED UNDER DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED. IN VOLUME 9, HE AND LI JUE FIGHT OVER THE EMPEROR BUT ENDS UP LOSING THE EMPEROR TO CAO CAO.

HUA XIONG:

ONE OF DONG ZHUO'S GENERALS. HE DEFEATED SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT WAS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU IN VOLUME 5.

JIANG QIN:

FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER REMEMBERING HOW FIERCE HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN, WAS LIKE. HE AND JIANG QIN WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ALLOWING SUN CE TO CAPTURE NIUZHU.

LADY FUYOU:

FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE ALL KILLED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LI JUE:

A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED UNDER DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED. IN VOLUME 9, HE AND GUO SI FIGHT OVER THE EMPEROR BUT ENDS UP LOSING THE EMPEROR TO CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:

THE SON OF CONSORT HE AND WAS BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER EMPEROR LING'S DEATH. HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN. HE BECAME THE EMPEROR WHEN DONG ZHUO FORCIBLY DETHRONED HIS HALF-BROTHER LIU BIAN.

LIU YAO:

GOVERNOR OF YANGZHOU. HE STOLE THE LANDS OF DANYANG AWAY FROM SUN CE'S UNCLE, WU JIN. IN VOLUME 10, SUN CE SETS OUT TO RECLAIM HIS UNCLE'S LOST LANDS AND CONQUER THE REST OF YANGZHOU.

TAO QIAN:

THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY ANGERED CAO CAO WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLED CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

ZHANG BAO:

ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:

LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHOU TAI:

FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER REMEMBERING HOW FIERCE HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN, WAS LIKE. HE AND JIANG QIN WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ALLOWING SUN CE TO CAPTURE NIUZHU.

ZHANG YING:

ONE OF LIU YAO'S GENERALS. HE WAS SENT TO DEFEND NIUZHU FROM SUN CE BUT WAS DEFEATED WHEN BANDITS (JIANG QIN AND ZHOU TAI) STAGED AN UPRISING FROM WITHIN.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:

THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG THAT ARE REFERRED TO AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." SUN CE SOUGHT TO ASK FOR THEIR ASSITANCE BEFORE SETTING OUT ON HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER SOUTHEASTERN CHINA. AFTER SUN CE'S ADAMANT INSISTENCE, THEY FINALLY AGREED TO HELP HIM.

-MORE TO COME IN THE FUTURE-

SANGOKUSHI

11

SUN CE'S ADVANCE

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

SANGOKUSHI
(ROMANCE OF THE
THREE KINGDOMS)

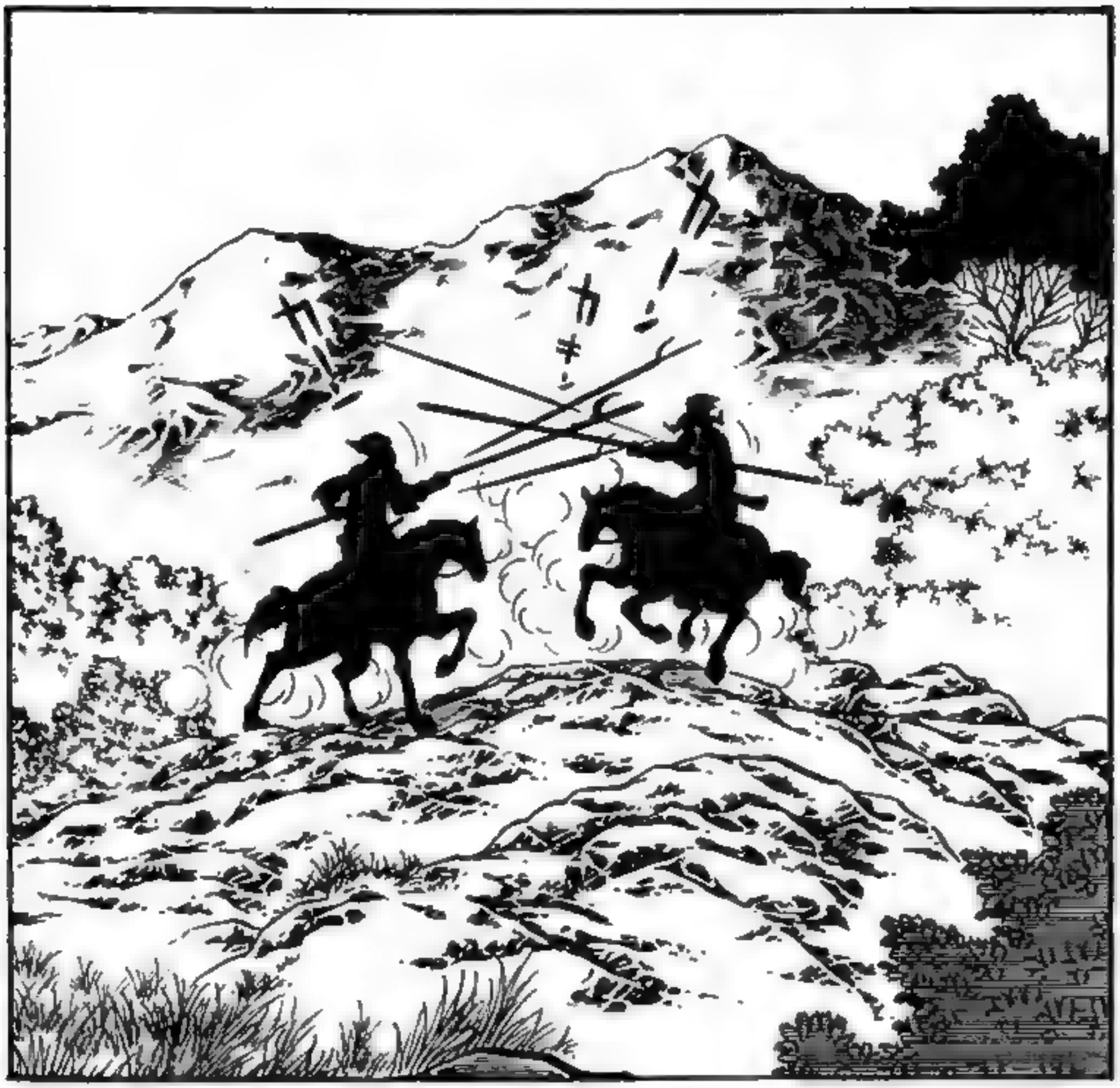
三国志

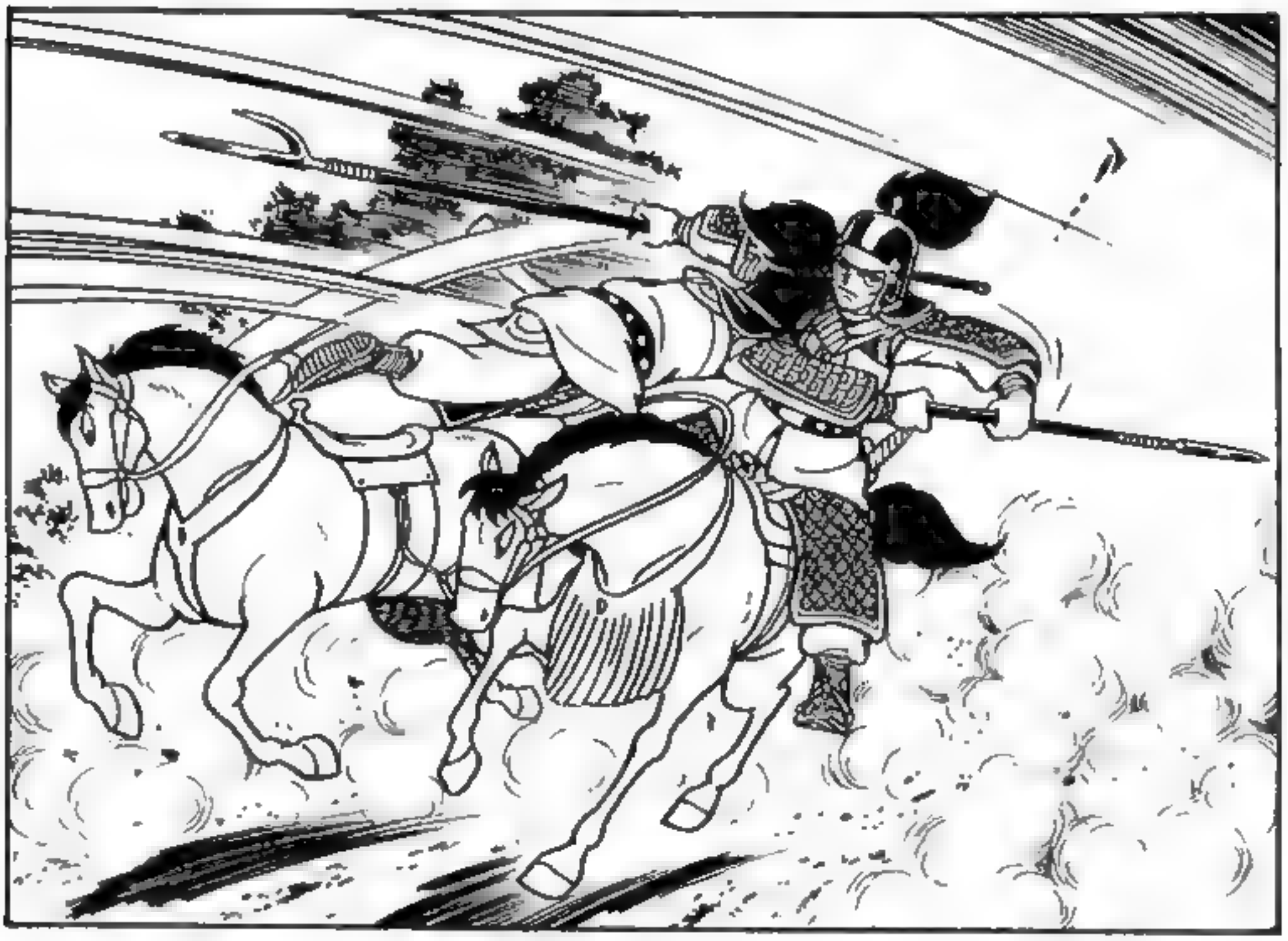
VOLUME 11
SUN CE'S ADVANCE

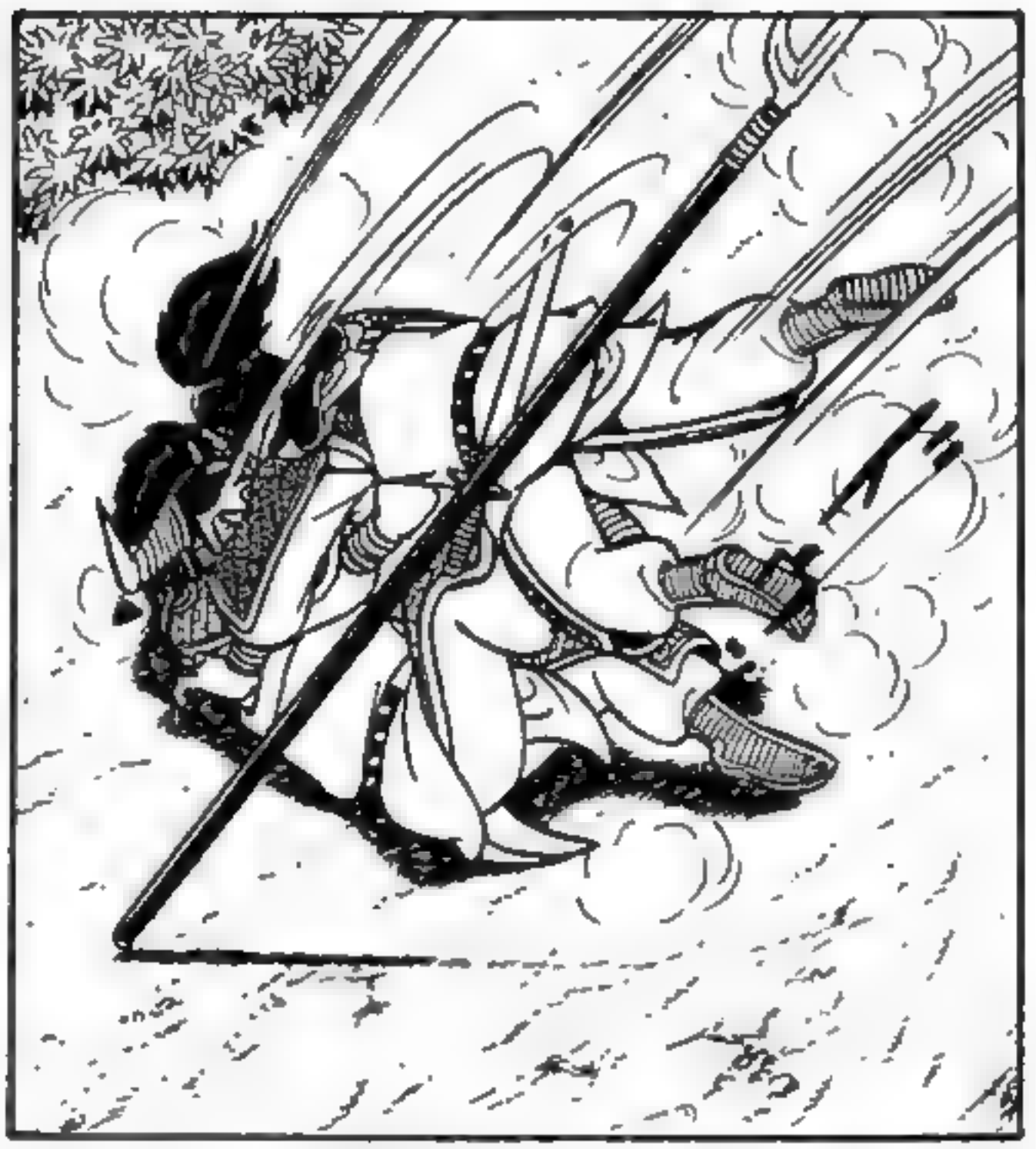
HORSE THIEF 176
LU BU'S WIT 144
PACIFICATION OF JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG 116
A NEW WAVE 85
TAISHI CI 46
MANEUVER 7
TABLE OF CONTENTS

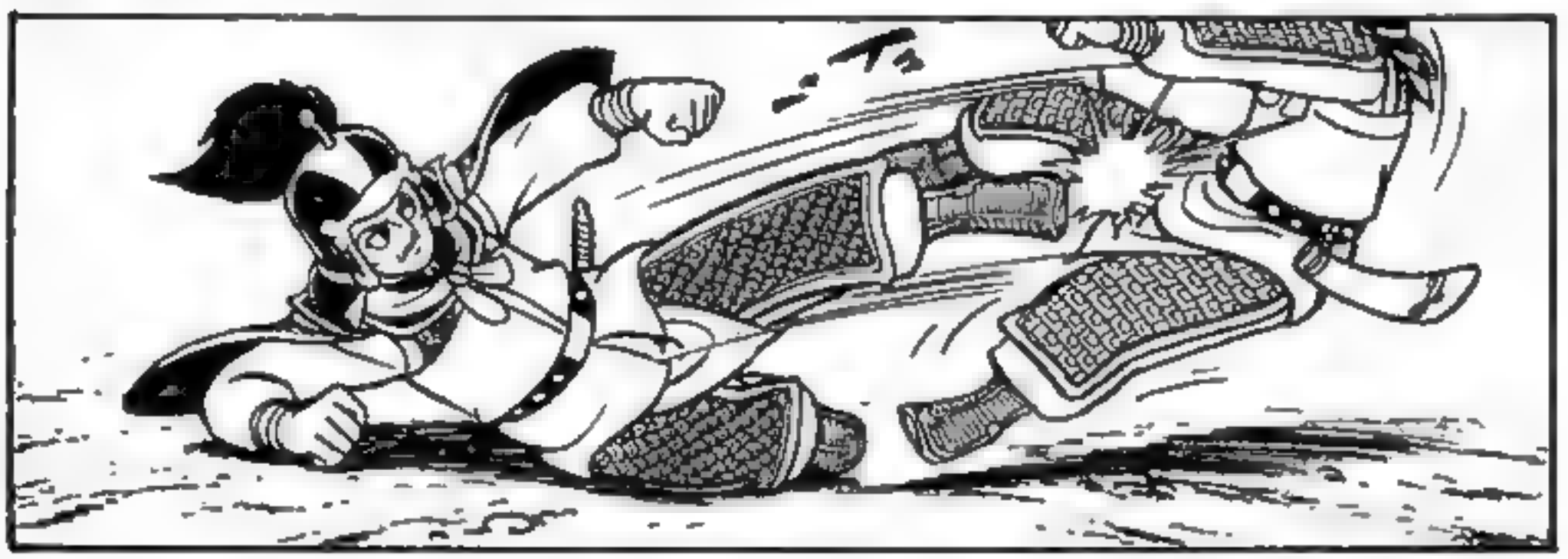
〔月刊『希望の友』掲載〕

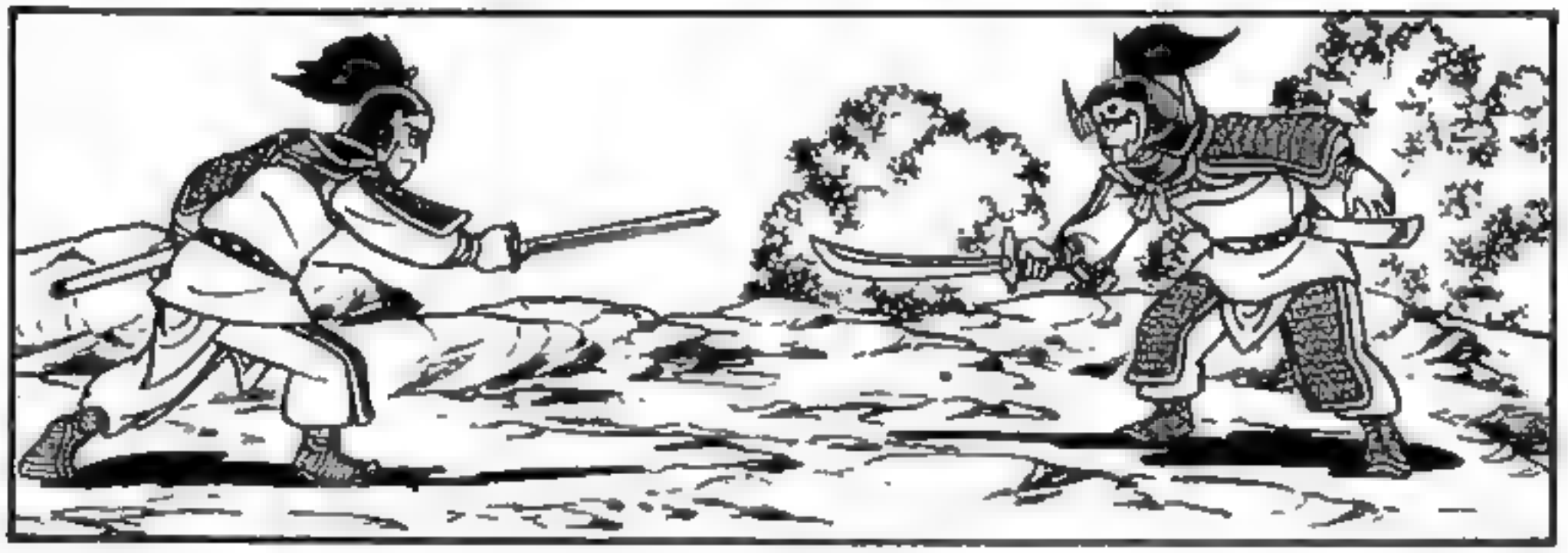
MANEUVER











AH!

COMMANDER! WHERE ARE YOU, SIR!?

NOT GOOD... JUST DEALING WITH SUN CE ALONE IS HARD ENOUGH BUT THERE ARE EVEN MORE ENEMIES NOW...!

WE SHALL SETTLE OUR MATCH NEXT TIME.

ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY, TAISHI CI!?

HAHA... THOUGH HE IS MY ENEMY, I MUST ADMIT THAT HE IS AN ADMIRABLE MAN.

IS SIR UNINJURED!?

SIR!

FINE, FINE.

I BEG OF THE COMMANDER TO PLEASE REFRAIN FROM SUCH RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR IN THE FUTURE.

I AGREE AS WELL. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO OUR ARMY IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO SIR...!?

I'LL SHOW THEM SOMETHING VERY INTERESTING WITHIN DUE TIME...

BUT I'VE GOTTEN A GOOD IDEA OF THE ENEMY'S SITUATION NOW.

HAHA... I'LL HAVE THAT FOOLISH BRAT IN TEARS AFTER TODAY'S BATTLE...!

CHARGE!

I'LL BE SURE TO TAKE YOUR HEAD TODAY, LIU YAO.

CHARGE!

揚

揚

揚

揚

THE ONE STANDING OVER THERE... YOU MUST BE SUN CE!

MY FEELINGS, EXACTLY.

AH, TAISHI CI.

IT'S TIME TO CONCLUDE OUR INTERRUPTED DUEL!

SIR'S LIFE IS MUCH TOO VALUABLE FOR THAT.

PLEASE WAIT, MY LORD.

SIR MUSTN'T HASTILY RUSH OUT DIRECTLY INTO THE BATTLEFIELDS.

MNN...

PLEASE ALLOW THIS CHENG PU TO DEAL WITH THE LIKES OF THAT MAN...!

SILENCE! MY LORD NEED NOT PERSONALLY DEAL WITH THE LIKES OF YOU...!

WHAT'S THE MATTER!? HAVE YOU GROWN SCARED, SUN CE!?

AH!

BUT THE BATTLE HAS JUST BEGUN! WHAT IS GOING ON...!?

IT'S THE SIGNAL TO RETREAT...!

わあっ
わあっ

YOU IDIOT! NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR THAT!

WHY DID MY LORD SOUND THE SIGNAL FOR RETREAT WHEN THE BATTLE HAS JUST BEGUN...!? I CANNOT ACCEPT THIS!

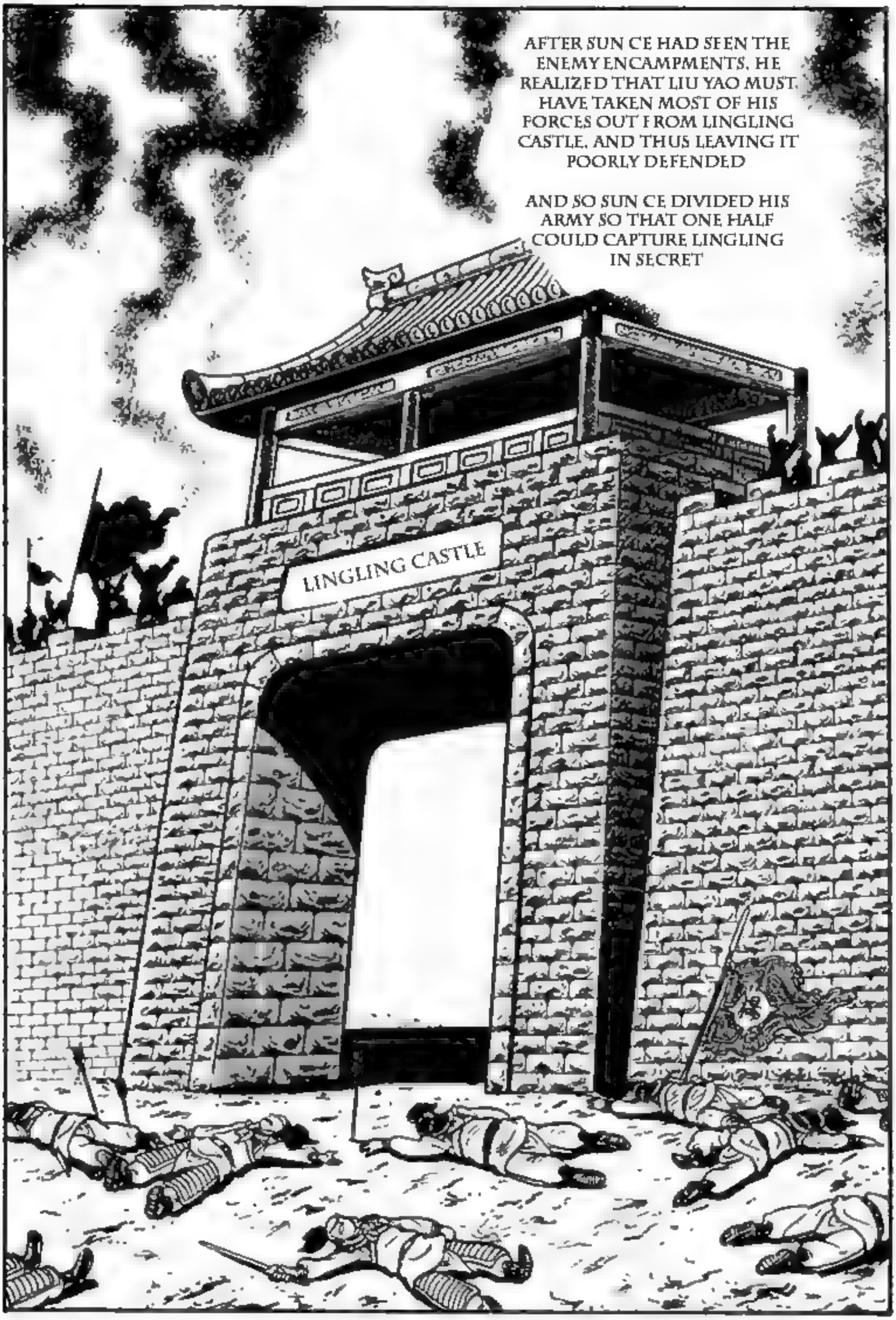
WHAT!?

WHILE WE WERE TOO FOCUSED ON THE ENEMY IN FRONT OF US, OUR CASTLE BEHIND US HAS FALLEN INTO ENEMY HANDS!

I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT THE CASTLE IN THE FIRST PLACE...

AFTER SUN CE HAD SEEN THE ENEMY ENCAMPMENTS, HE REALIZED THAT LIU YAO MUST HAVE TAKEN MOST OF HIS FORCES OUT FROM LINGLING CASTLE, AND THUS LEAVING IT POORLY DEFENDED

AND SO SUN CE DIVIDED HIS ARMY SO THAT ONE HALF COULD CAPTURE LINGLING IN SECRET



THAT WOULD BE BEST, SIR.

WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RETREAT TO MOLING CASTLE AND RETHINK OUR BATTLE STRATEGY.

YES, MY LORD.

YES, SIR!

ALRIGHT, LET'S MOVE OUT!

IF ONLY I HAD TAKEN HIS HEAD BACK IN SHENTING HILLS...

AS I FEARED, THAT SUN CE IS NO SIMPLETON...

MY LORD HAS GIVEN UP A ONCE IN A LIFETIME CHANCE...!

IF ONLY WE DIDN'T THINK OF IT AS A TRAP AND ATTACKED AT FULL FORCE...

LIU YAO'S ARMY QUICKLY BEGAN THEIR RETREAT TO MOLING

BUT THEIR NUMBERS ARE STILL GREAT. WE CANNOT LEAVE THEM BE...

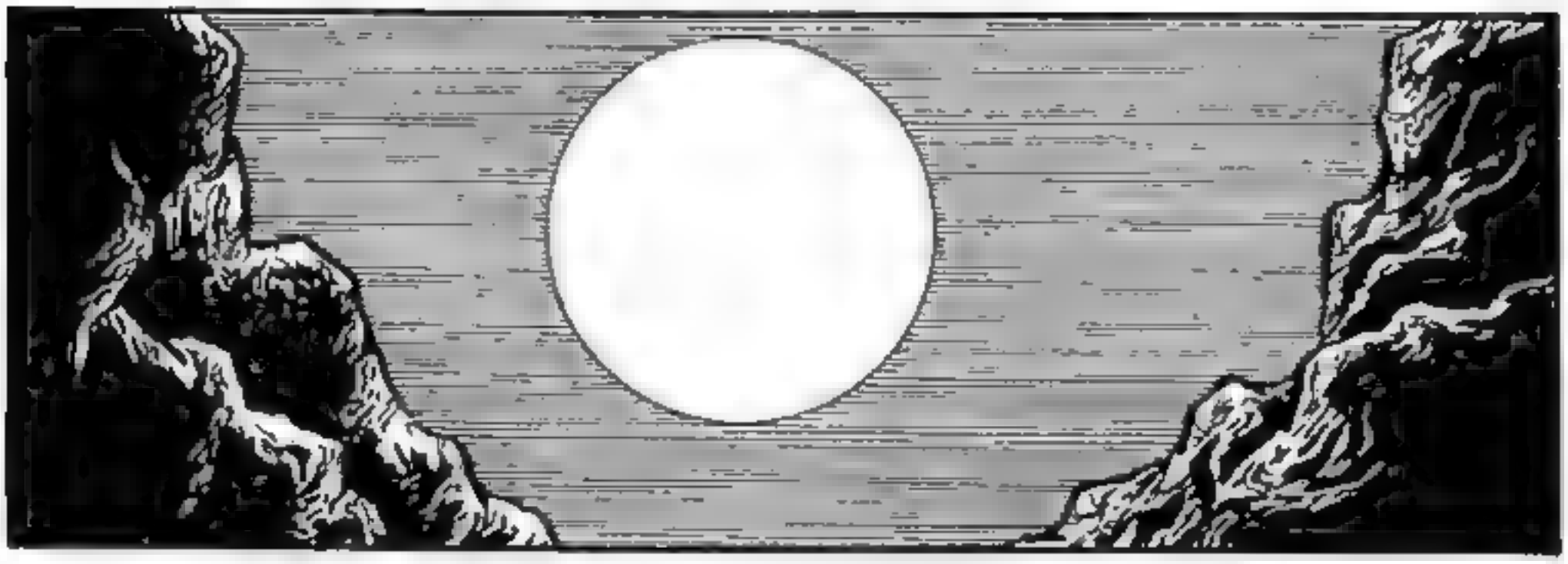
YES, THEY MUST BE SCARED AT THE FACT THAT THEY LOST THEIR MAIN BASE OF OPERATIONS.

MY LORD, LIU YAO'S FORCES ARE RETREATING IN A PANIC.

WE MUST STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS STILL HOT.

HE MAY EVEN GROW TO SURPASS HIS FATHER ONE DAY...!

AS EXPECTED OF SUN JIAN'S SON.



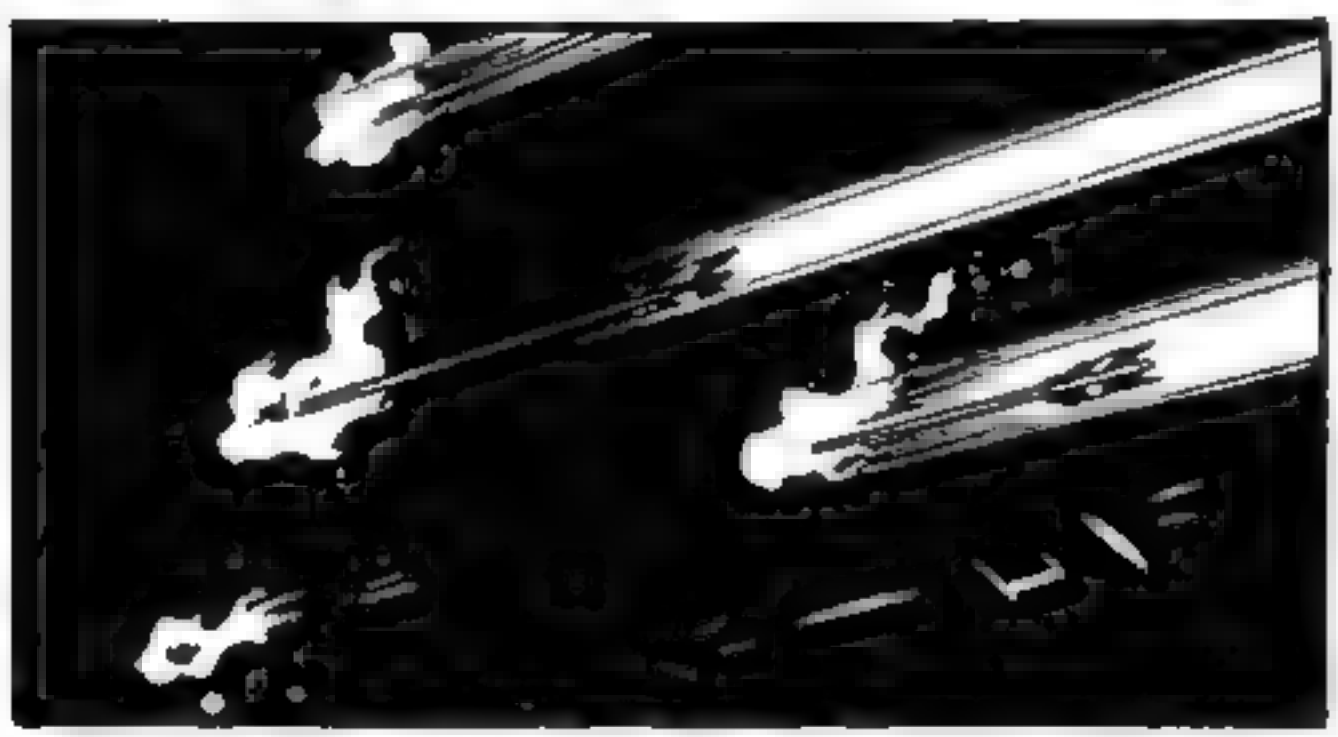
BUT I SHOULD HAVE PAID CLOSER ATTEN-TION TO WHAT KIND OF A MAN SUN CE WAS AFTER LOSING NIUZHU TO HIM...

WE SHOULD BE SAFE NOW THAT WE'VE RETREATED THIS FAR BACK...

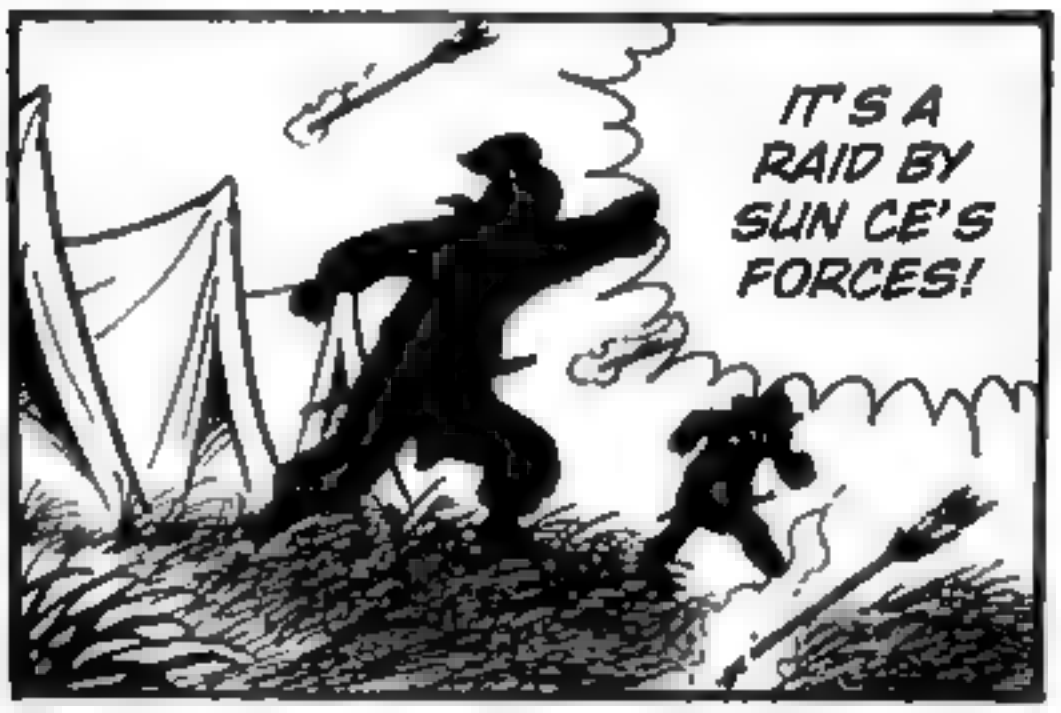
I MUST CLEANSE MY HONOUR FOR MY FAILURE AT NIUZHU NO MATTER THE COST...!

THOUGH MY LORD CALLED ME A COWARD FOR MY PREVIOUS DEFEAT, HE SHOULD NOW REALIZE WELL ENOUGH THAT SUN CE IS A MAN TO BE RECKONED WITH.

HMM?

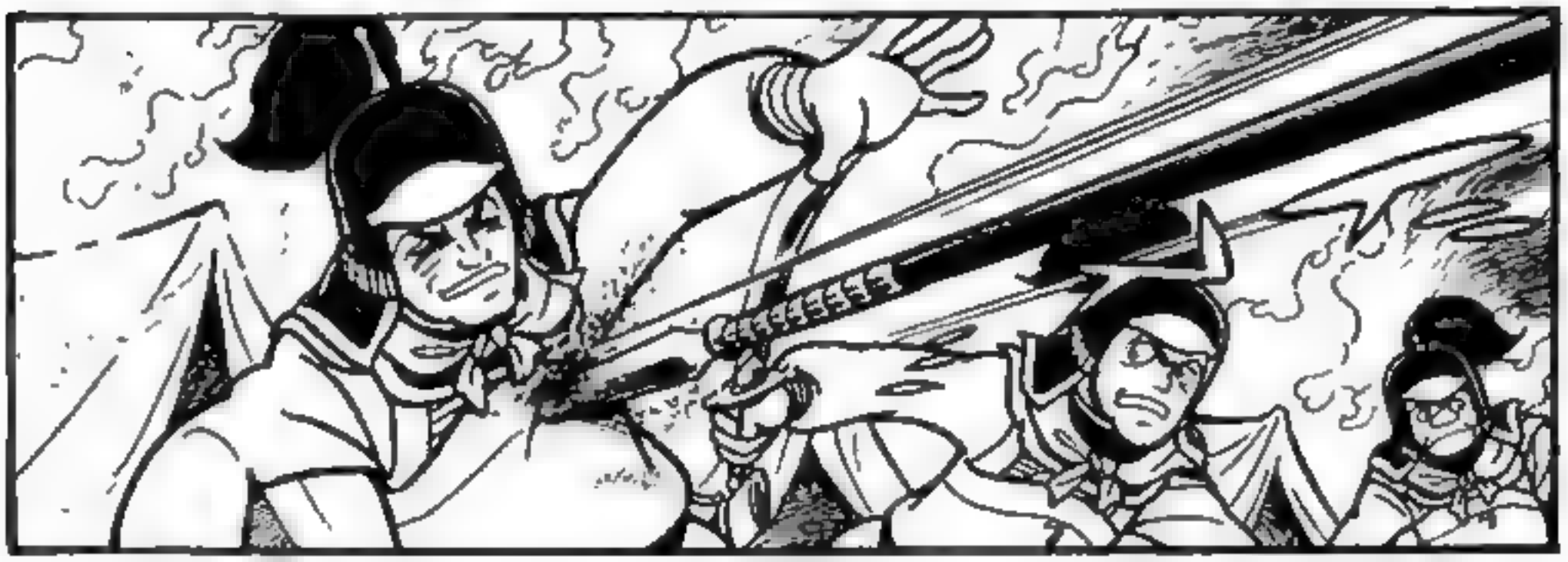


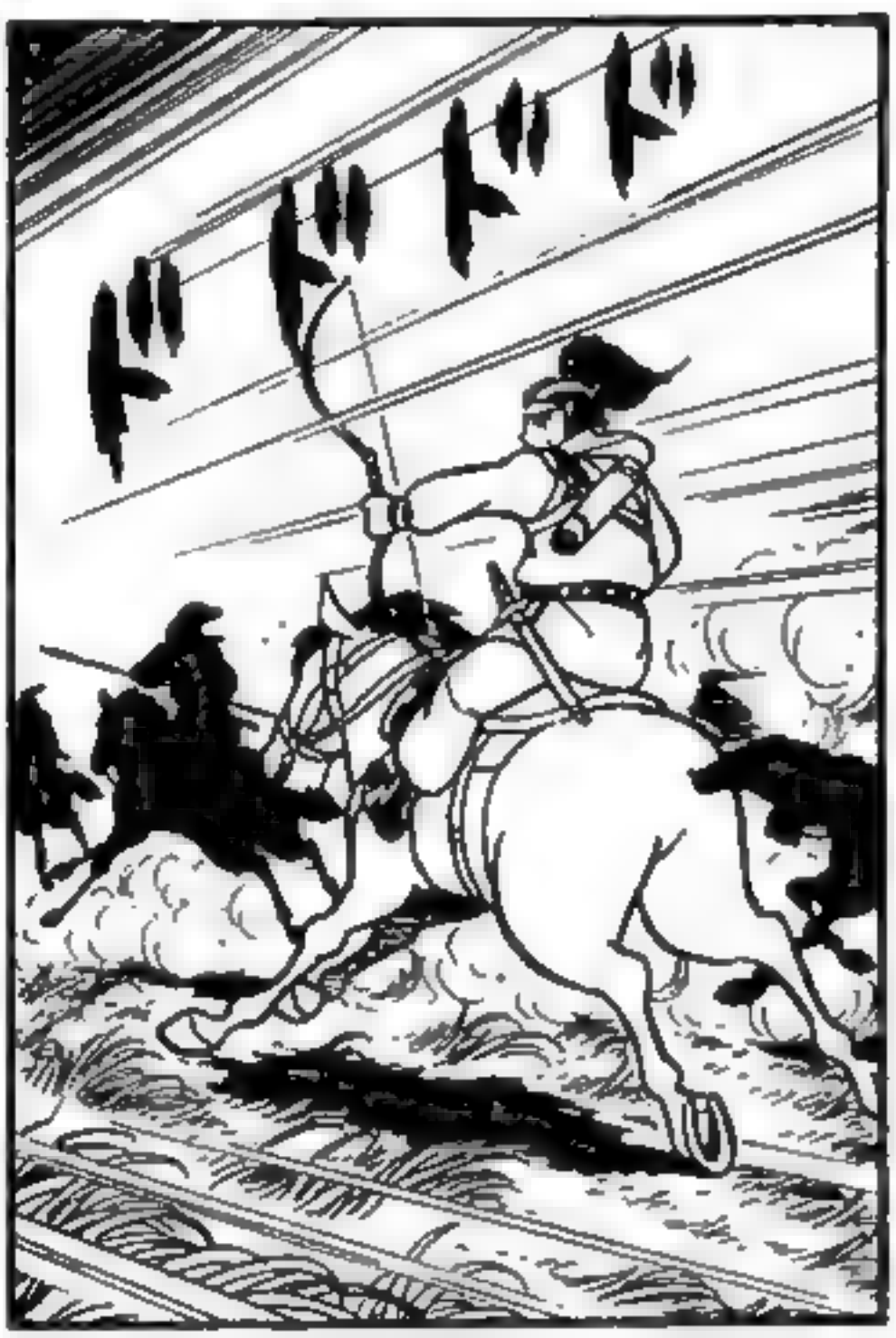
WHAT!?


IT'S A
RAID BY
SUN CE'S
FORCES!

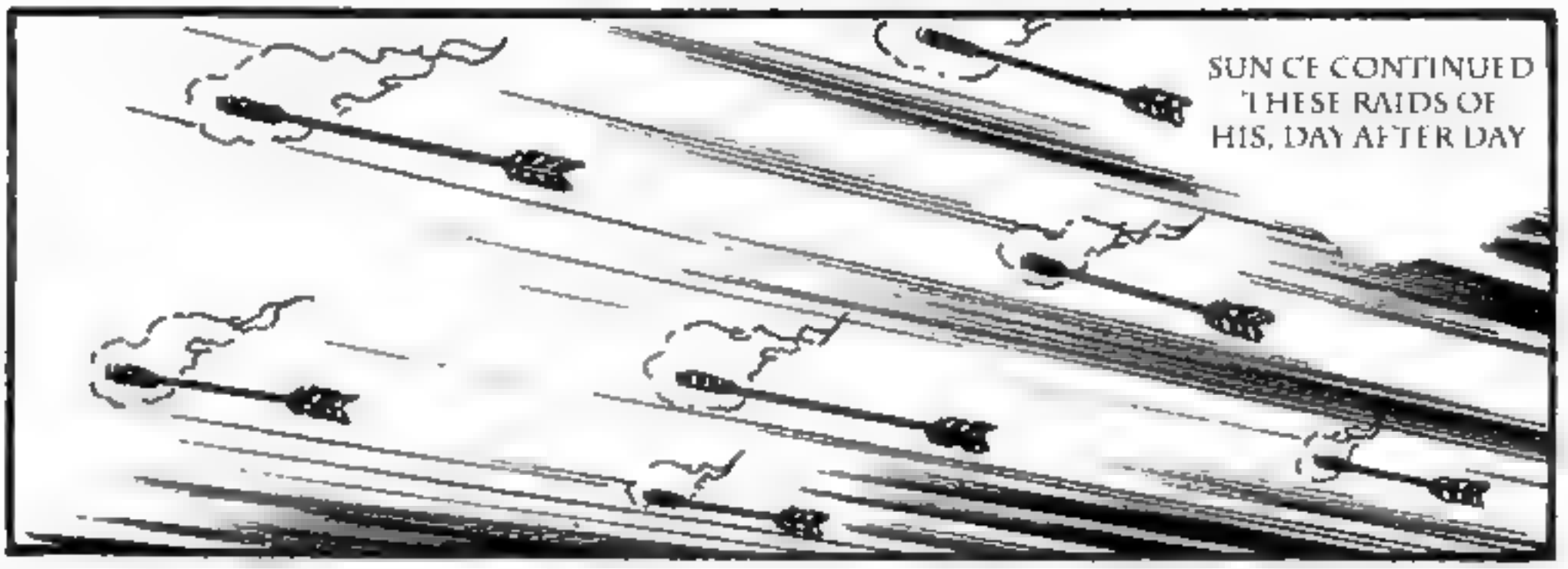
THEY'VE GOTTEN THE JUMP ON US AGAIN!

WHAT!





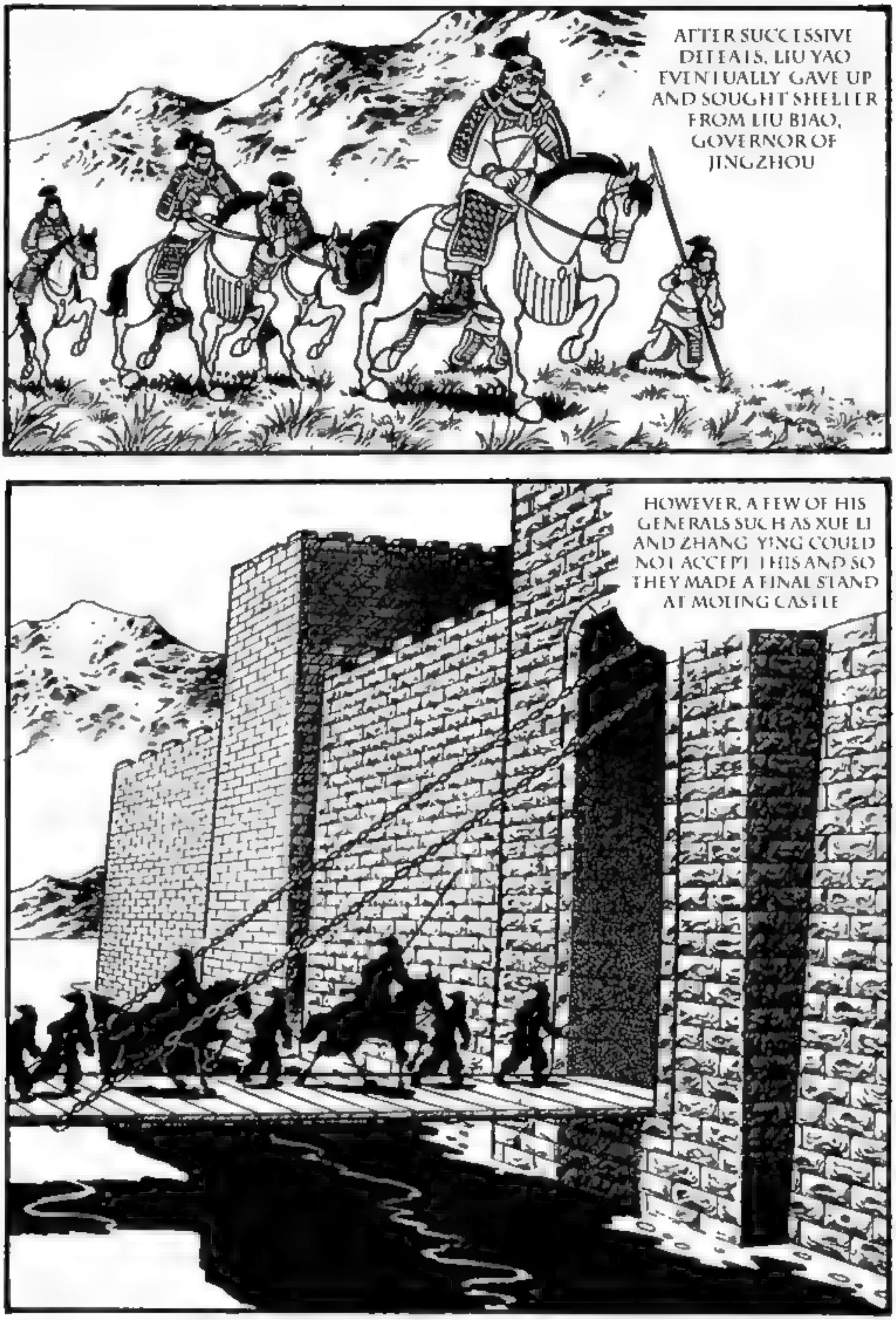
AGHH...!!!


SUN CE CONTINUED THESE RAIDS OF HIS, DAY AFTER DAY

LIU YAO HAD ALREADY SUFFERED OVER 10,000 CASUALTIES

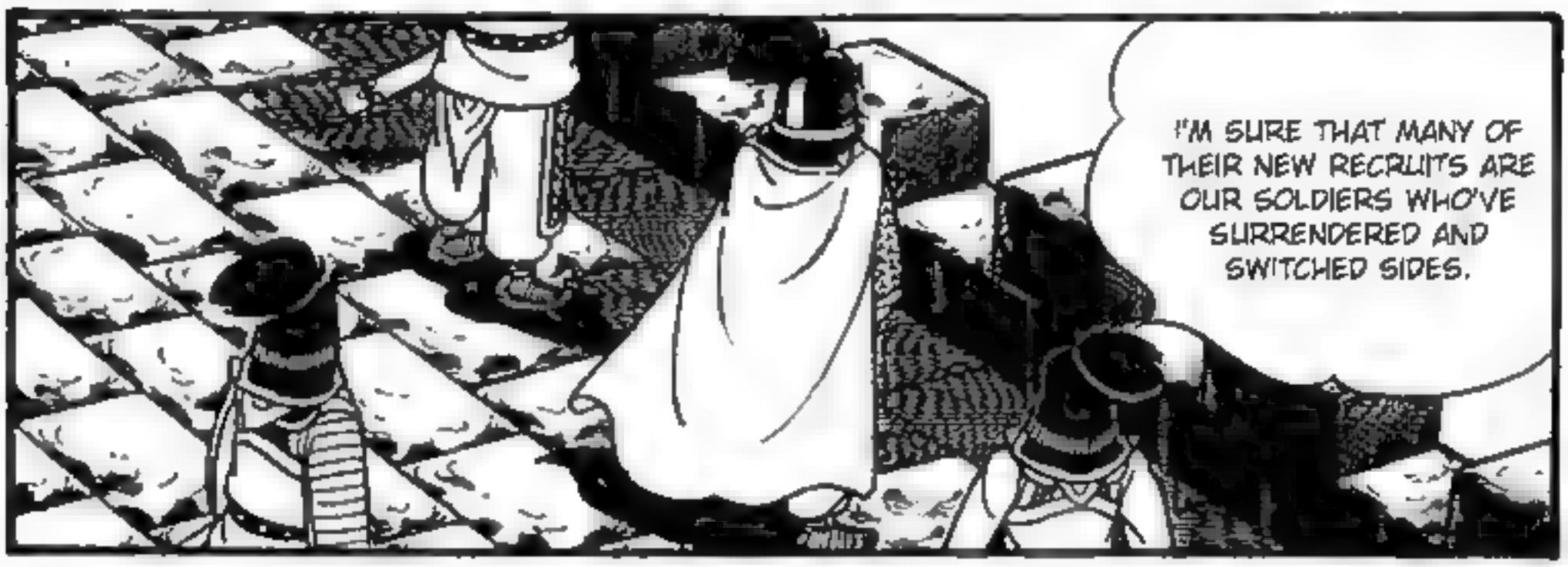
WITHOUT A MOMENT TO REST,

AS A RESULT, LIU YAO'S ARMY WAS LEFT IN TOTAL DISARRAY AND SOLDIERS BEGAN TO DESERT THEIR POSTS.


AFTER SUCCESSIVE DEFEATS, LIU YAO EVENTUALLY GAVE UP AND SOUGHT SHELTER FROM LIU BIAO, GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU
HOWEVER, A FEW OF HIS GENERALS SUCH AS XUE LI AND ZHANG YING COULD NOT ACCEPT THIS AND SO THEY MADE A FINAL STAND AT MOLING CASTLE

THE VICTOR'S ARMY IS BOUND TO INCREASE WHILE THE LOSER'S WILL ONLY DWINDLE. THAT IS HOW THINGS ARE.

YES...
GENERAL ZHANG YING. SUN CE'S FORCES HAVE GROWN EVEN LARGER.


I'M SURE THAT MANY OF THEIR NEW RECRUITS ARE OUR SOLDIERS WHO'VE SURRENDERED AND SWITCHED SIDES.

OHH!

HAS HE NOW...?

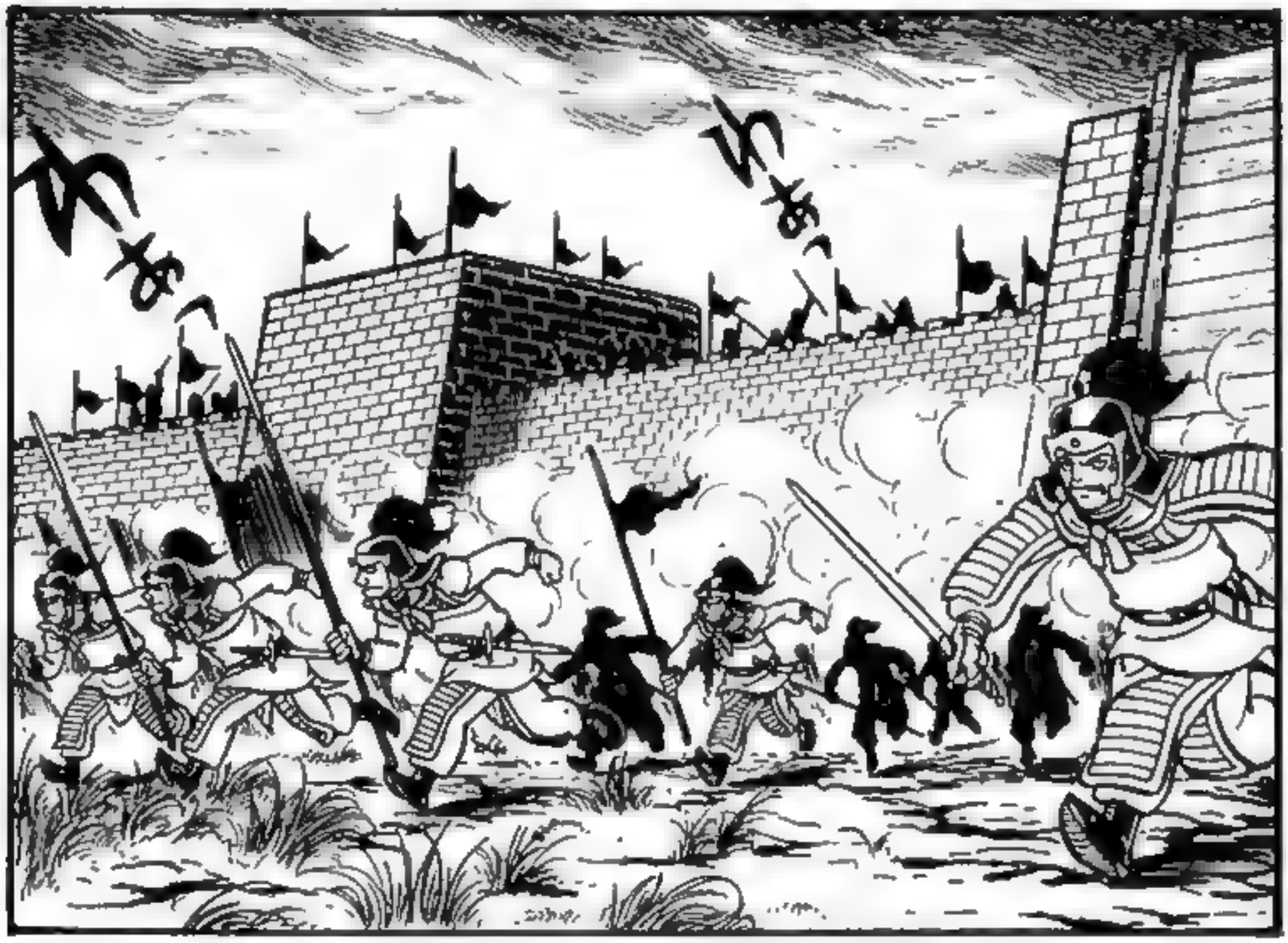
GENERAL, SUN CE HAS BEGUN HIS OFFENSIVE!

AHH! THAT MUST BE THEIR COMMANDER, SUN CE!

GIVE ME MY BOW!

TIME TO CLEANSE MY HONOUR...!

RETREAT!



HAHA! I HAVE SHOT DOWN THE MIGHTY SUN CE WITH MY OWN HANDS!

LOOK, THE ENEMIES ARE RETREATING!

YOU THERE.

YES, SIR?

YES, YOU DO HAVE A POINT...

THOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT SUN CE WAS SHOT DOWN, IT IS HARD TO TELL IF HE HAS ACTUALLY DIED...

UNDERSTOOD, SIR.

I WANT YOU TO FIND OUT IF SUN CE HAS REALLY DIED IN BATTLE OR NOT.

WHAT!? SUN CE HAS REALLY BEEN CONFIRMED AS DEAD!?

I SEE... WELL DONE.

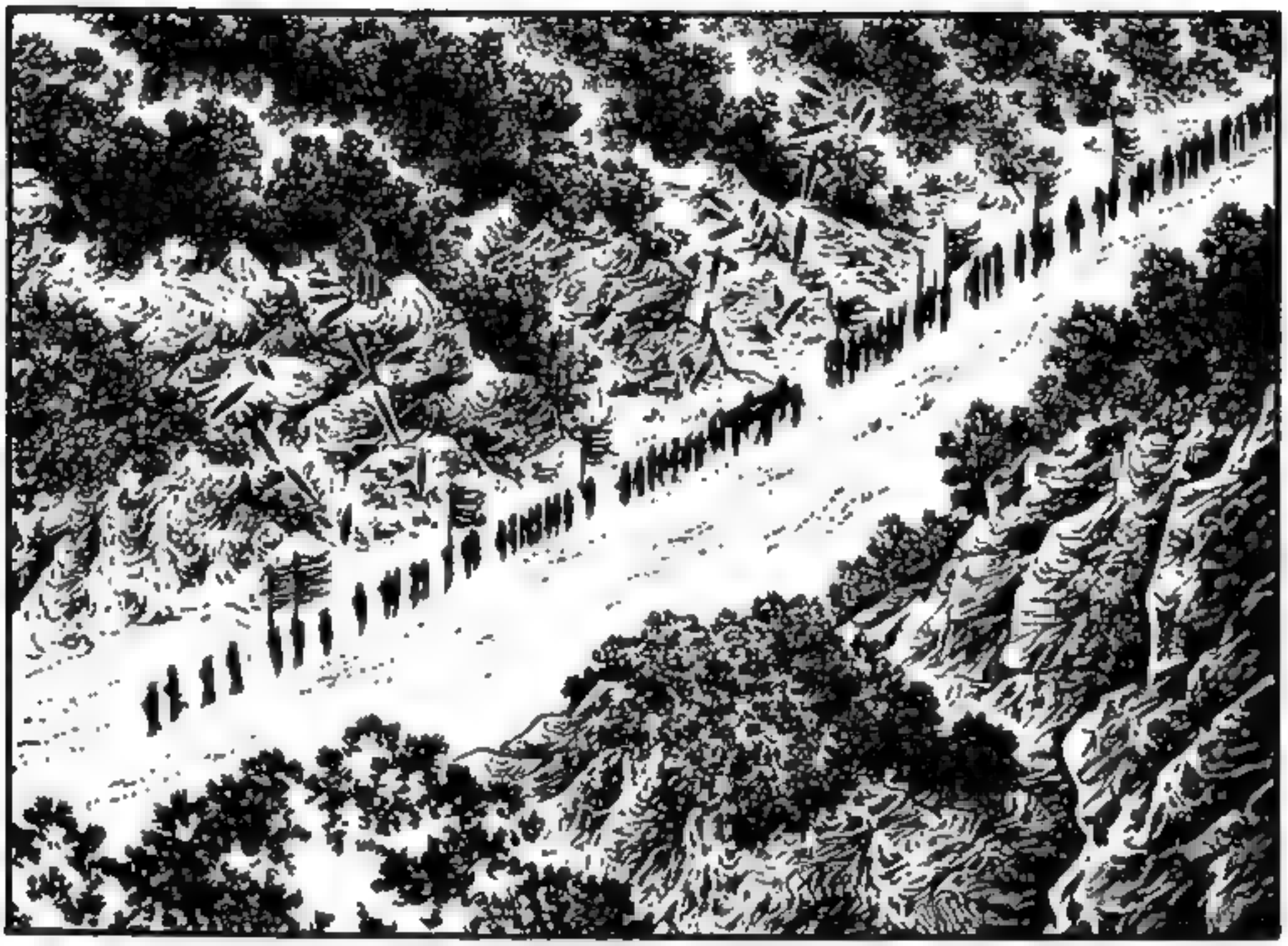
THEY EVEN SEEM TO BE PREPARING FOR A FUNERAL.

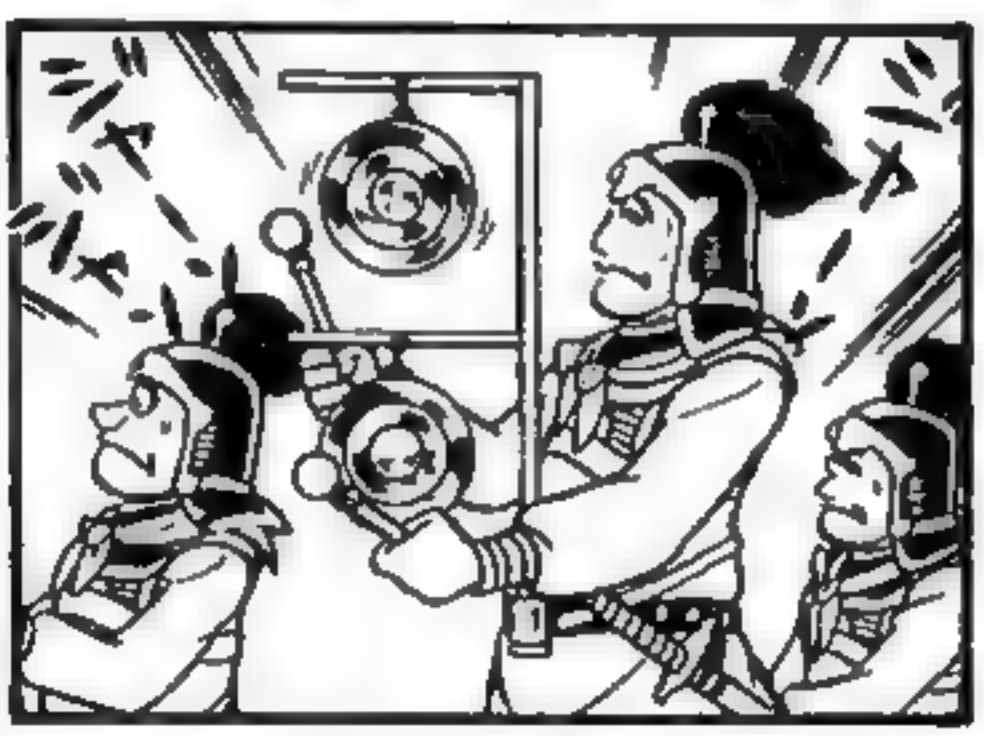
YES, I BELIEVE SO, SIR. THE ENEMY SOLDIERS AND GENERALS ALL SEEMED GRIEF-STRICKEN.

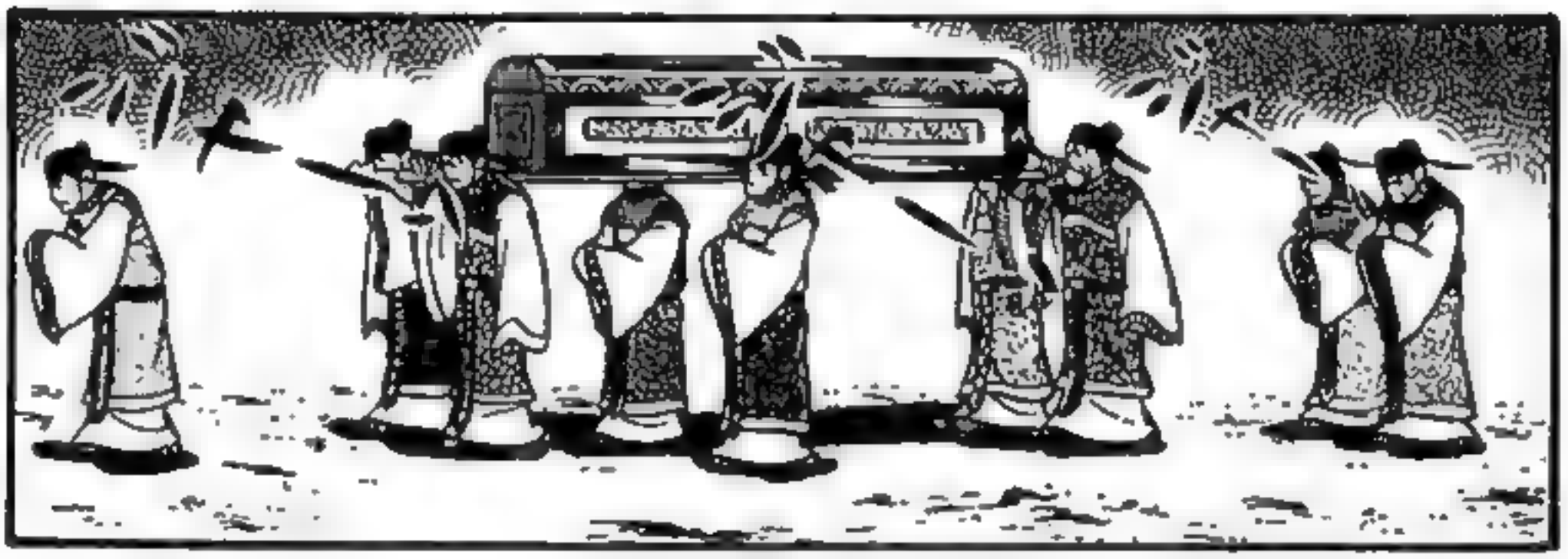
WITHOUT SUN CE, THE ENEMY ARMY IS NOTHING BUT A HEADLESS CHICKEN!

IT IS AS OUR SPY HAS REPORTED. VICTORY IS NOW WITHIN OUR GRASP, GENTLEMEN.

WE SHALL AMBUSH THEM AS THEY CARRY OUT THAT BRAT'S FUNERAL!







HMM?

AH!

ハイヤー

NOW! ATTACK!

AHHH!

AGH!

WHA...!?

S...
SUN CE!!!

YOU SHALLOW-MINDED FOOL! DID YOU THINK I WOULD REALLY DIE SO EASILY!?

BUT YOU'VE REALIZED IT MUCH TOO LATE.

HAHA... THE COFFIN YOU SEE BEFORE YOU IS EMPTY.

BUT... WHAT OF THAT COFFIN!? WAS THIS JUST A TRAP ALL ALONG!?

CC-

C-

WE HAVE THE ENEMY COMPLETELY SURROUNDED! ATTACK!

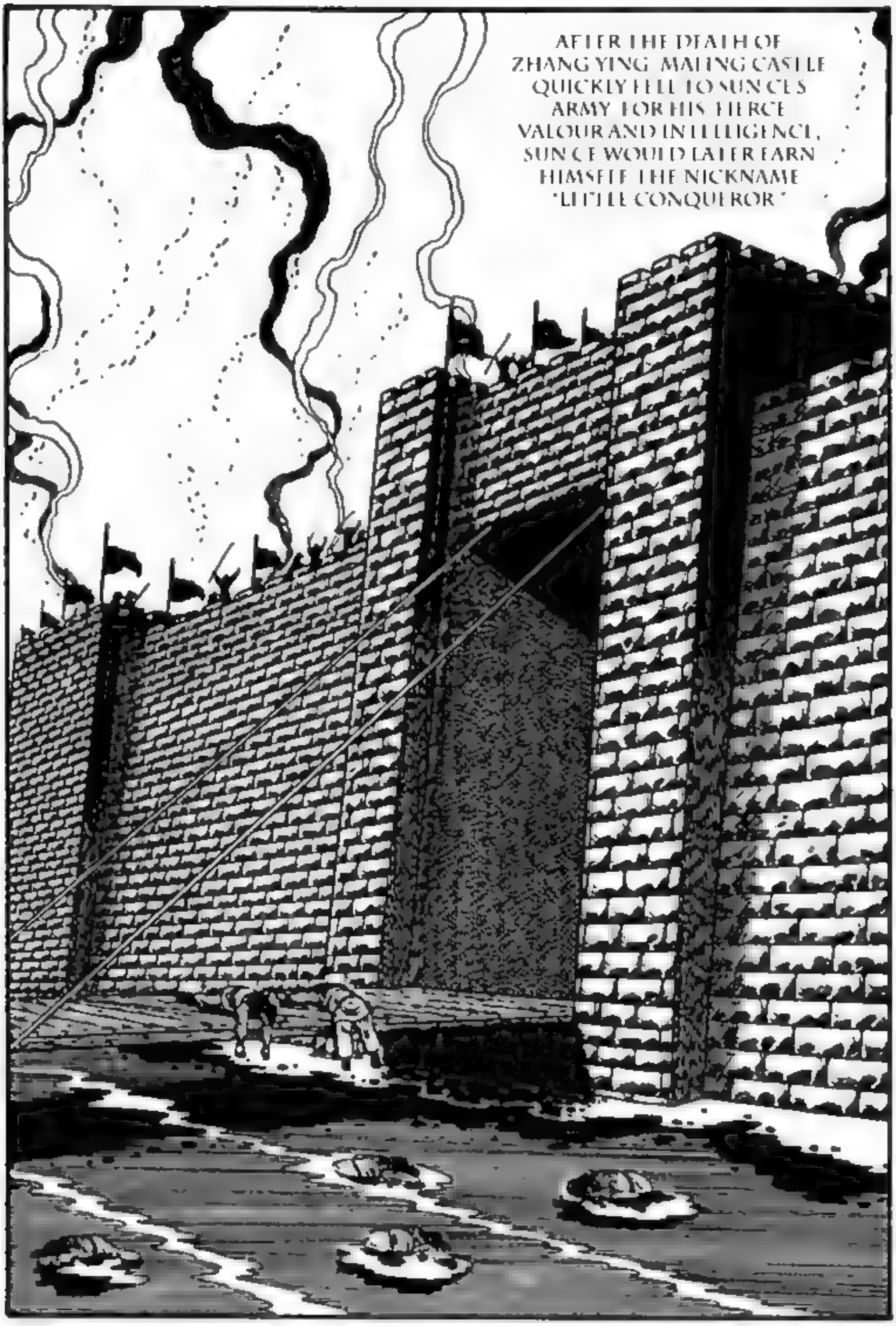
NGHH...!

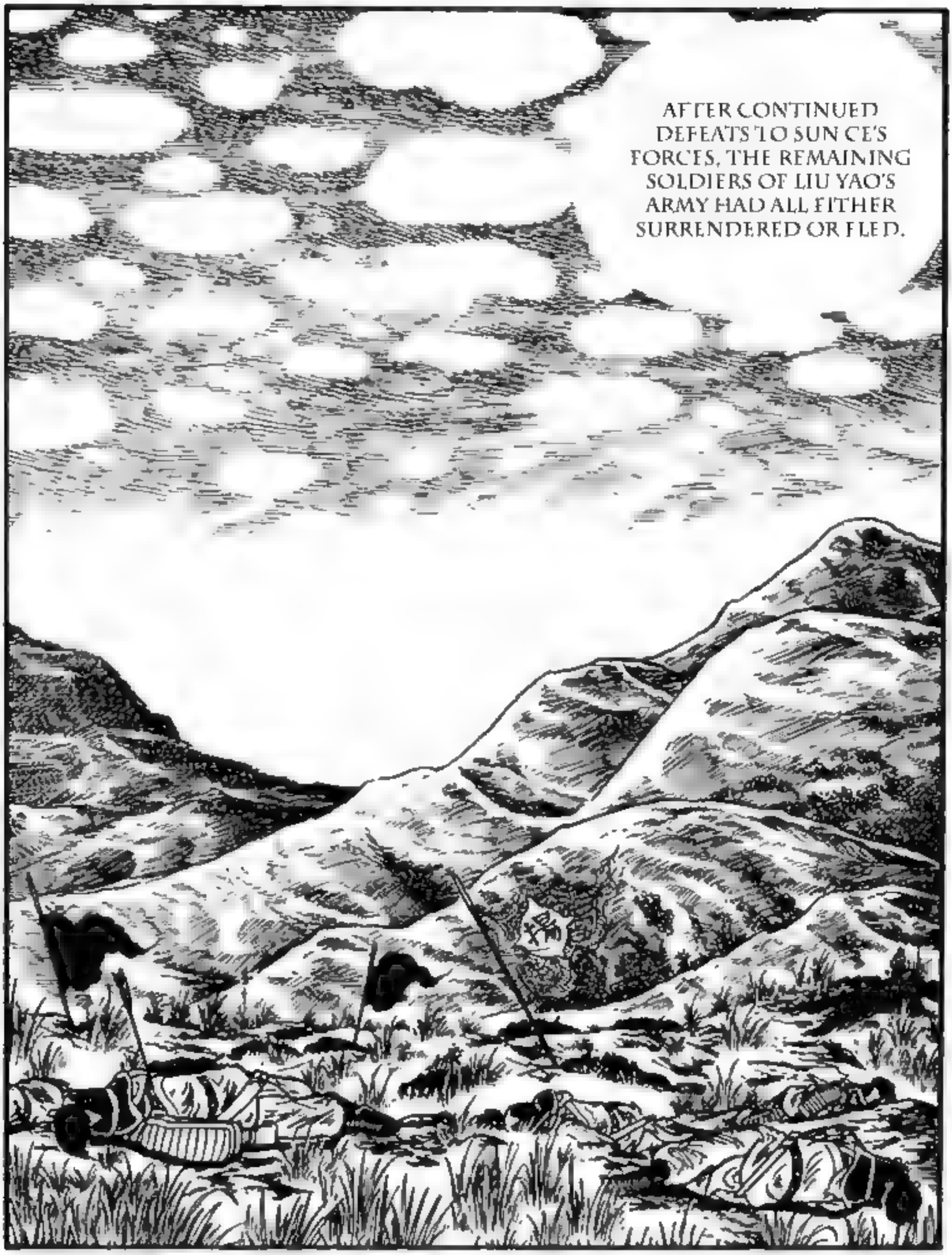
YOU...!!!

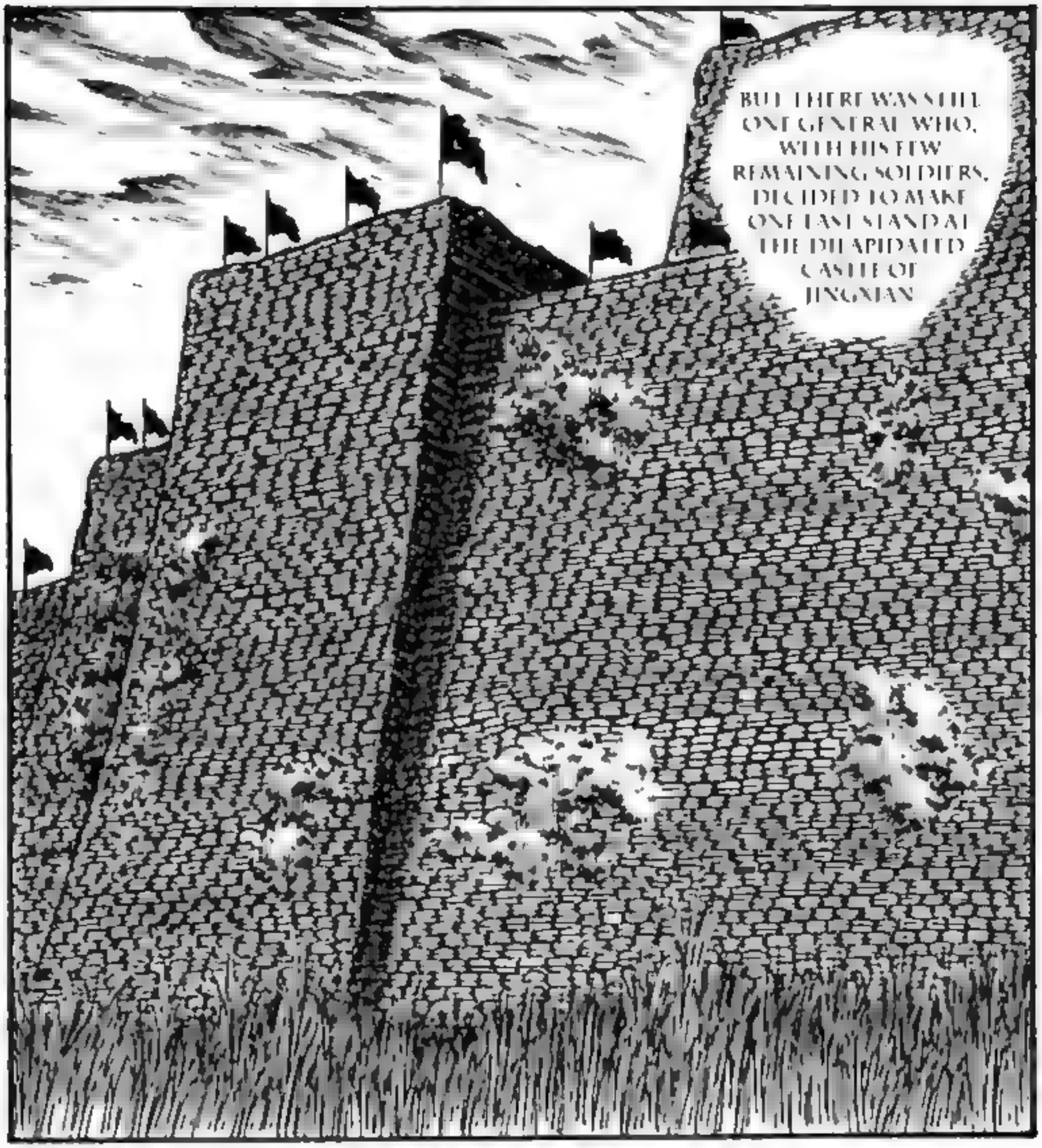
ZHANG YING! IT WOULD BE QUITE SHAMEFUL TO DIE AT THE HANDS OF MY FOOTSOLDIERS. SO LET ME DO YOU A FAVOUR BY TAKING YOUR HEAD MYSELF!

NOW LET US CHARGE INTO MALING AT ONCE!

THE ENEMY HAS LOST ALL WILL TO FIGHT!


AFTER THE DEATH OF
ZHANG YING, MAI'NG CASTLE
QUICKLY FELL TO SUN CE'S
ARMY FOR HIS FIERCE
VALOUR AND INTELLIGENCE,
SUN CE WOULD LATER EARN
HIMSELF THE NICKNAME
"LITTLE CONQUEROR"


AFTER CONTINUED DEFEATS TO SUN CE'S FORCES, THE REMAINING SOLDIERS OF LIU YAO'S ARMY HAD ALL EITHER SURRENDERED OR FLED.


BUT THERE WAS STILL ONE GENERAL WHO, WITH HIS FEW REMAINING SOLDIERS, DECIDED TO MAKE ONE LAST STAND AT THE DILAPIDATED CASTLE OF JINGXIAN

THAT MAN WAS LAISHI CI

EVEN THOUGH THEIR NUMBERS ARE RELATIVELY SMALL, EACH ENEMY SOLDIER IS PREPARED TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

I BELIEVE THAT WOULD BE QUITE UNWISE, MY LORD.

SINCE THE ENEMIES ONLY NUMBER AT 2000, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF SIMPLY ATTACKING HEAD-ON?

MOREOVER, JIANGXIAN IS PROTECTED BY MOUNTAINS FROM BEHIND,

AND BY SWAMPS FROM THE FRONT.

I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST TO SEND AN ELITE UNIT OF AROUND 10 SOLDIERS TO SECRETLY ENTER JIANGXIAN AND START MULTIPLE FIRES. WHILE THE ENEMY IS THROWN IN PANIC FROM THE FIRES, WE SHALL ATTACK WITH FULL FORCE.

HMM, I SEE... THEN WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO?

CARELESSLY ATTACKING HEAD-ON WOULD ONLY BRING ABOUT AN UNNECESSARILY LARGE AMOUNT OF CASUALTIES FOR OUR SIDE.

BUT I DO NOT WISH TO KILL THE ENEMY GENERAL, TAISHI CI. I WOULD LIKE TO CAPTURE HIM ALIVE AND MAKE HIM MY SUBORDINATE IF POSSIBLE.

HMM...

ONCE JIANGXIAN IS ATTACKED BY FLAMES FROM THE INSIDE AND BY OUR FORCES FROM THE OUTSIDE,

THEN I SUGGEST THAT WE DO NOT ATTACK THE EASTERN GATES.

THEY WILL NATURALLY ESCAPE THROUGH THE EASTERN GATES, THE ONLY PLACE FREE FROM ENEMIES OR FLAMES.

GOOD, WE SHALL CARRY OUT YOUR PLAN THEN.

AND THEN WE SHALL SET UP A TRAP OUTSIDE TO CATCH TAISHI CI.

LET US COMMENCE THE OPER-ATION THEN.

YES...

MY LORD, TONIGHT WOULD BE THE BEST TIME TO CARRY OUT THE PLAN.

LISTEN UP, MEN! YOU WILL SECRETLY CLIMB OVER JIANGXIAN'S WALLS TONIGHT AND START UP MULTIPLE FIRES INSIDE TO THROW OUR ENEMIES IN PANIC. THE STRONG WIND TONIGHT WILL ALLOW THE FIRE TO SPREAD VERY EASILY!

NOW GO!

IF YOU SUCCEED AND RETURN BACK ALIVE, YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT YOU WILL BE HANDSOMELY REWARDED AND PROMOTED TO A CAPTAIN COMMANDING A 100 SOLDIERS!

YES... BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO CLIMB IT.

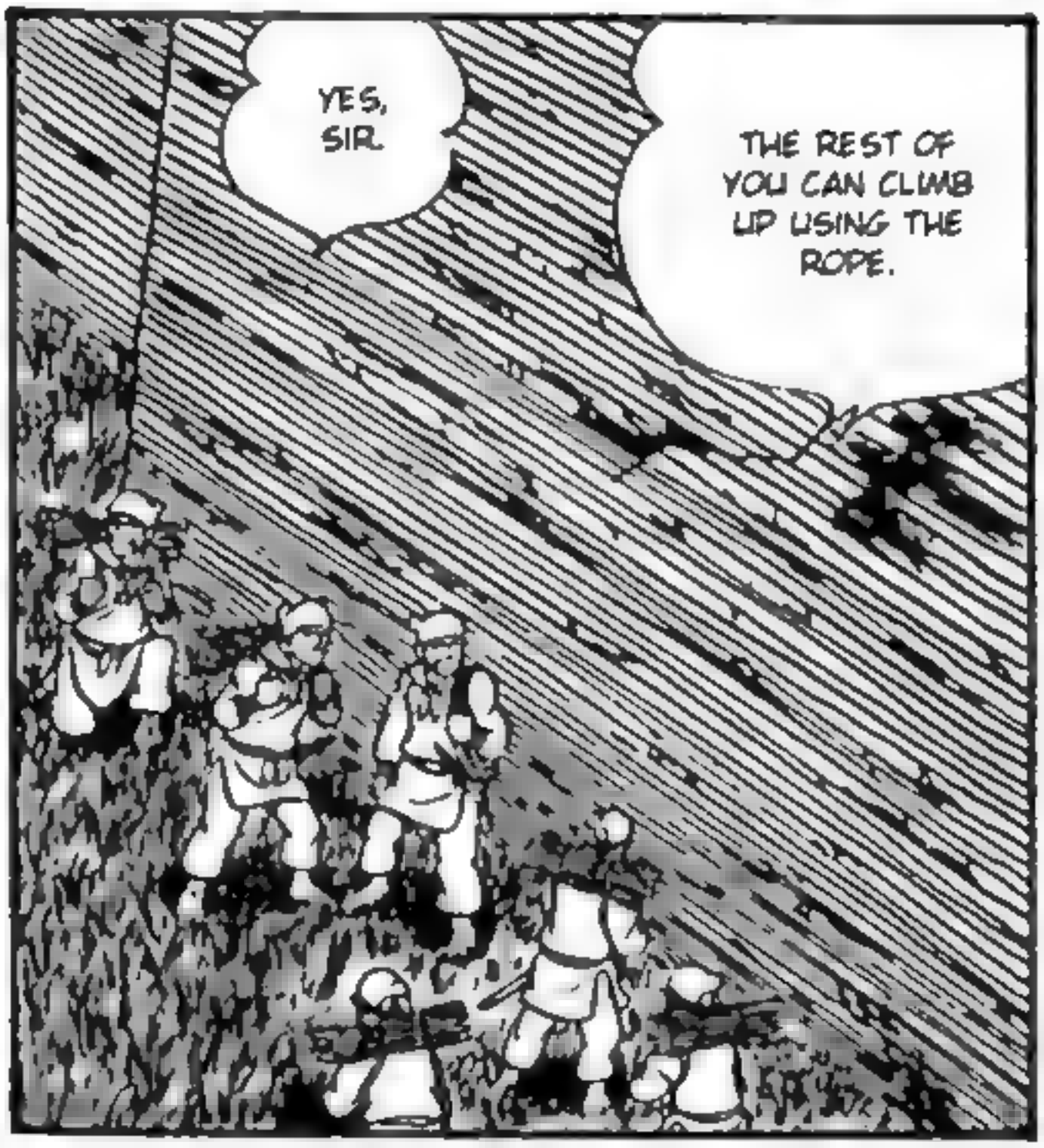
CAPTAIN, THESE WALLS ARE QUITE STEEP.

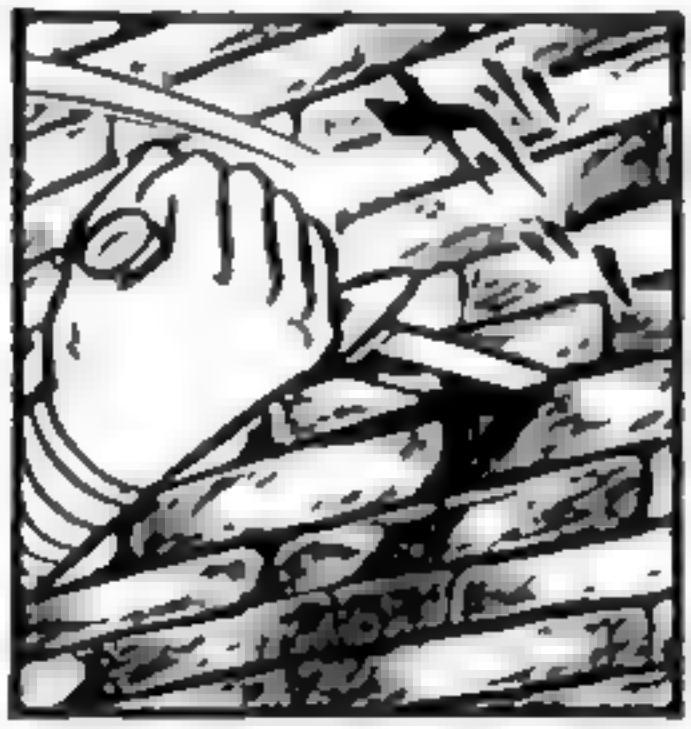
LOOK. THESE WALLS AREN'T MADE FROM STONES BUT RATHER HARDENED SOIL AND MUD.

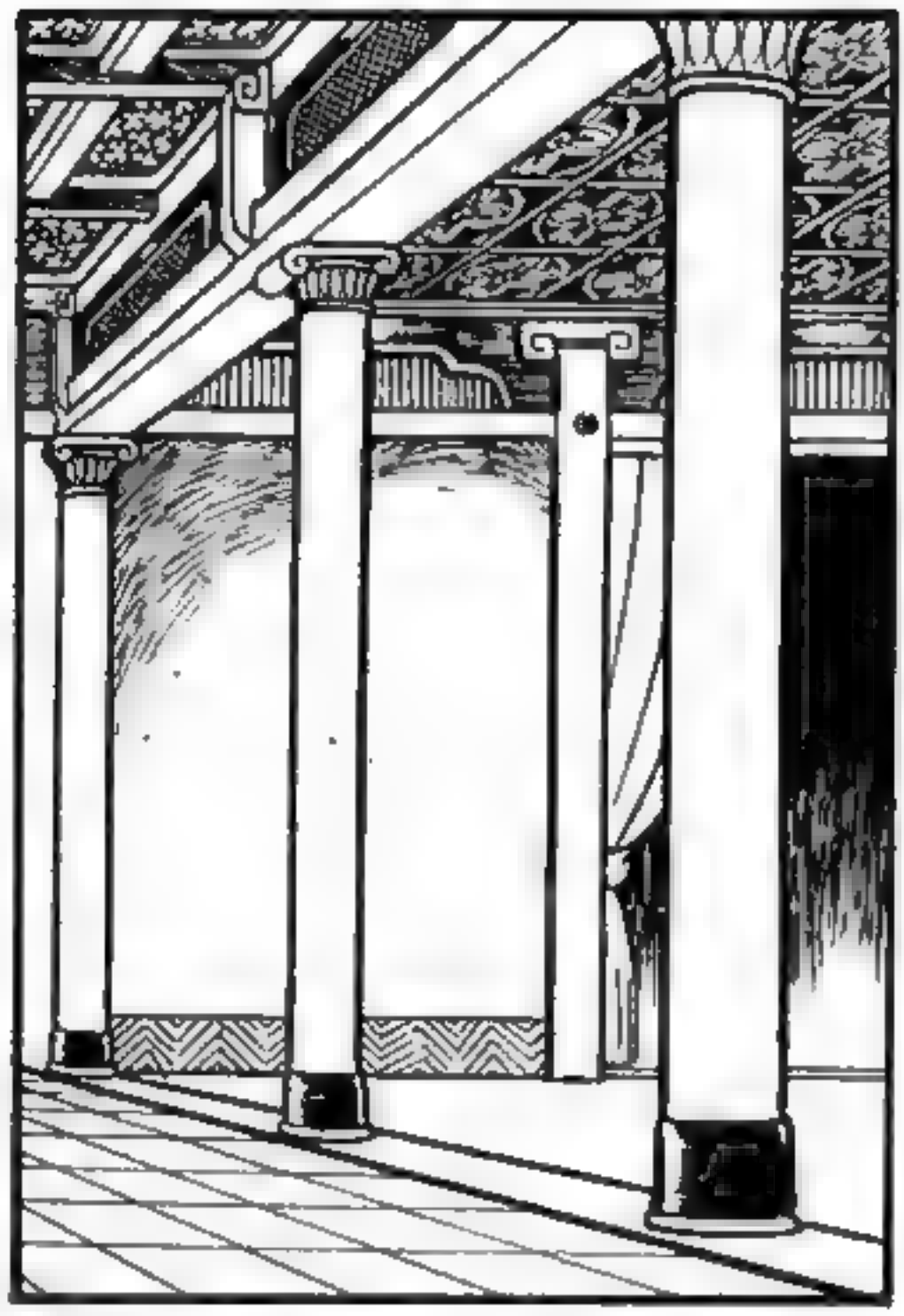
AND IT'S BEEN WEATHERED DOWN BY YEARS OF RAIN AND WIND.

I'LL GO FIRST AND LOWER THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

SO YOU CAN EASILY STICK A DAGGER IN BETWEEN THE TILES AND USE IT AS FOOTING.


YES, SIR.
THE REST OF YOU CAN CLIMB UP USING THE ROPE.





FIRE!

FIRE!

WHAT!

AHHH!

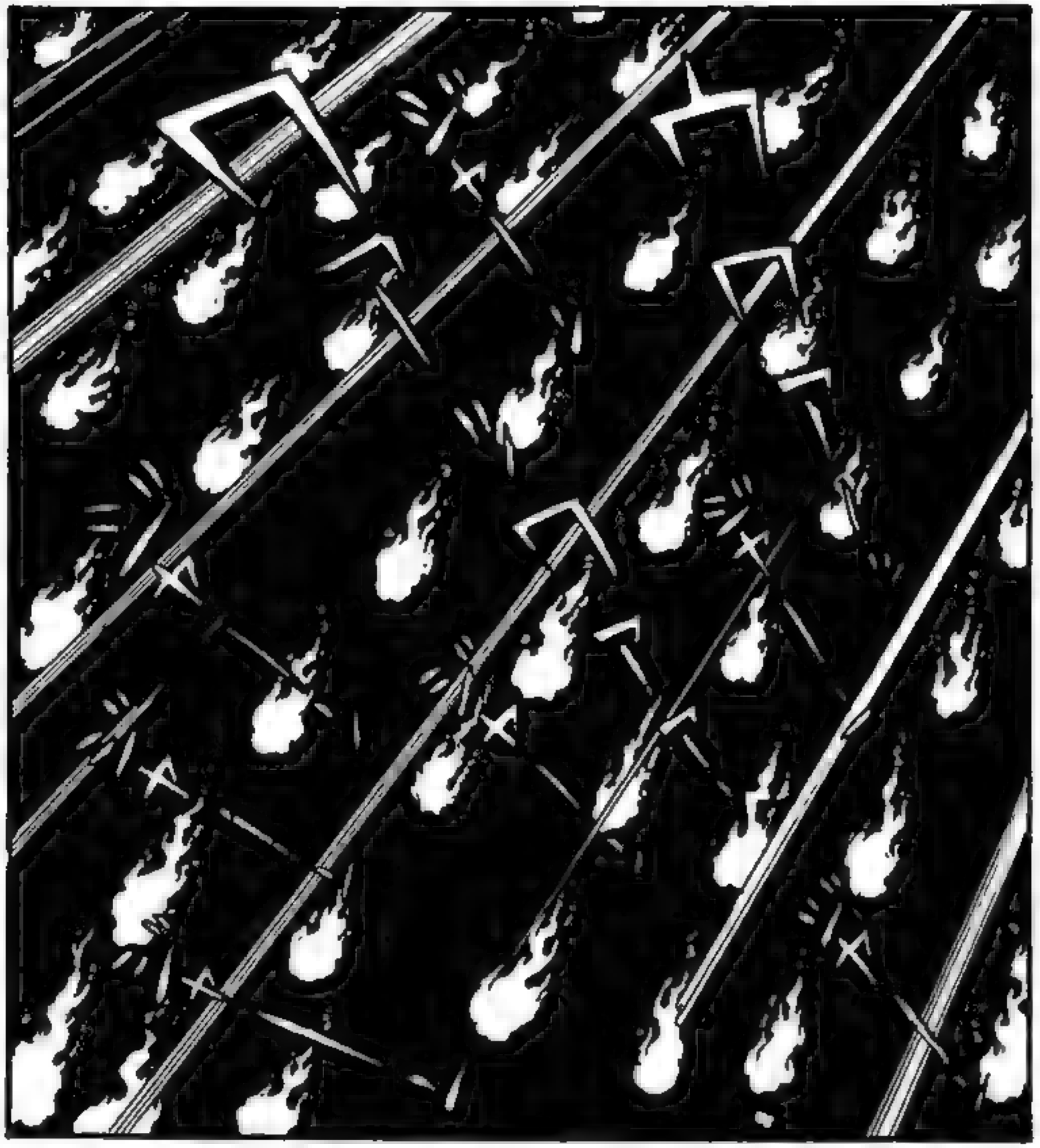
GENERAL, FIRES HAVE SUDDENLY BROKEN OUT EVERYWHERE!
WHAT'S GOING ON!?

I'M AFRAID THAT THE WINDS ARE TOO STRONG FOR THE FIRES TO BE EXTINGUISHED, GENERAL!

DO NOT PANIC. THIS MUST BE THE ENEMY'S PLOY. JUST TRY TO EXTINGUISH THE FIRES AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

HMM?

AGHH!



RETURN TO YOUR POSTS AND DEFEND THE CASTLE!

THE ENEMIES ARE ATTACK-ING AT FULL FORCE!

BUT WHAT DO WE ABOUT THE FIRES, GENERAL!? AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BE BURNED ALIVE!!!

RETURN TO YOUR POSTS AND DFEND THE CASTLE WALLS!

UGH...!

GENERAL, THE ENEMIES HAVE ALREADY BREACHED THE WALLS! WE CANNOT FIGHT THEM ALL OFF!

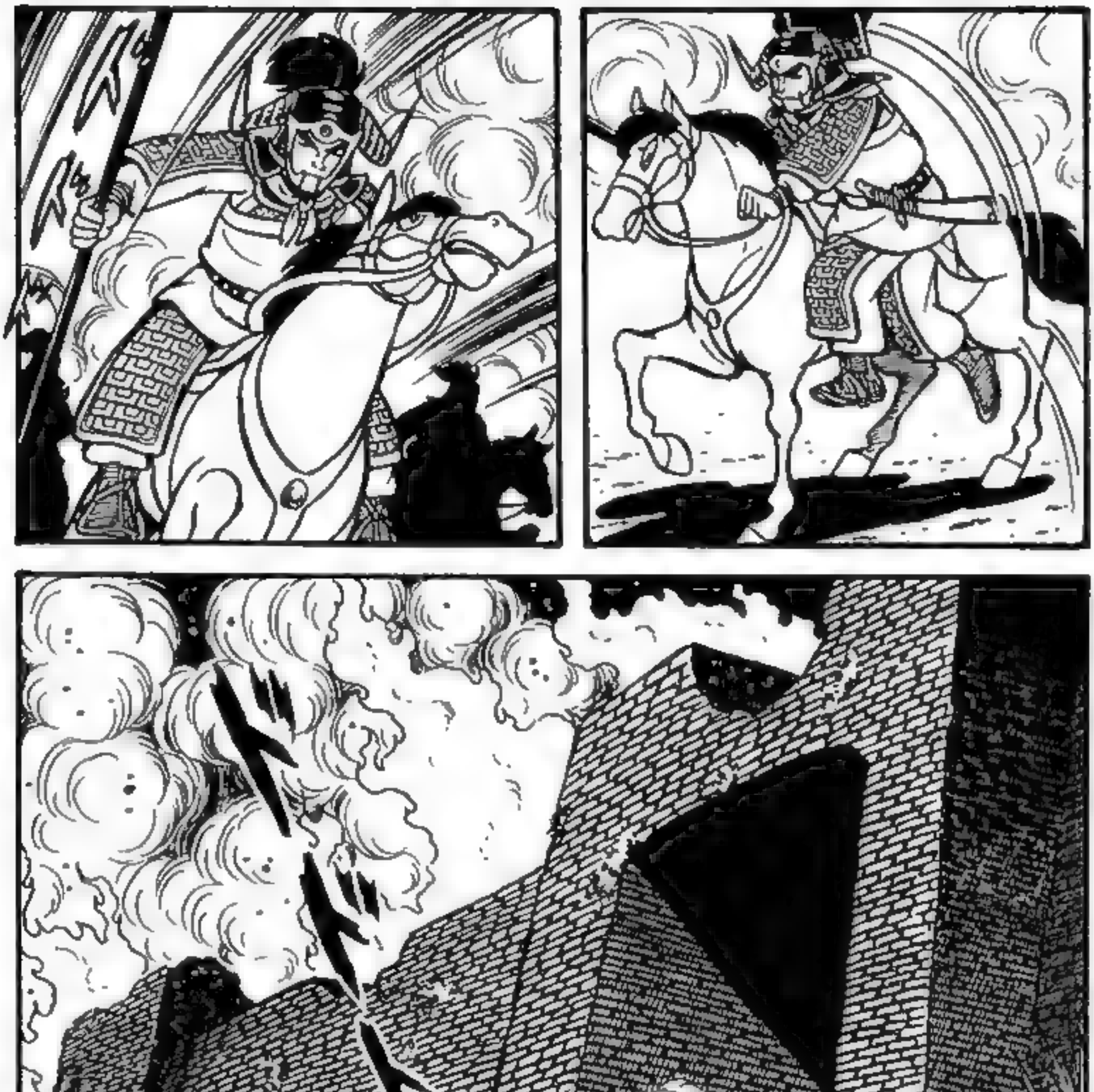
AH, IS THAT SO!?

BUT THE ENEMIES HAVE LEFT THE EASTERN GATES EMPTY, SIR! IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF THE SWAMPS OUTSIDE MAKING THE TERRAIN DIFFICULT TO CROSS!

AS LONG AS WE ESCAPE WITH OUR LIVES, WE CAN LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY!

GOOD, THEN LET US RETREAT THROUGH THE EASTERN GATES FOR NOW.

ALL SOLDIERS, RETREAT! RETREAT THROUGH THE EASTERN GATES!

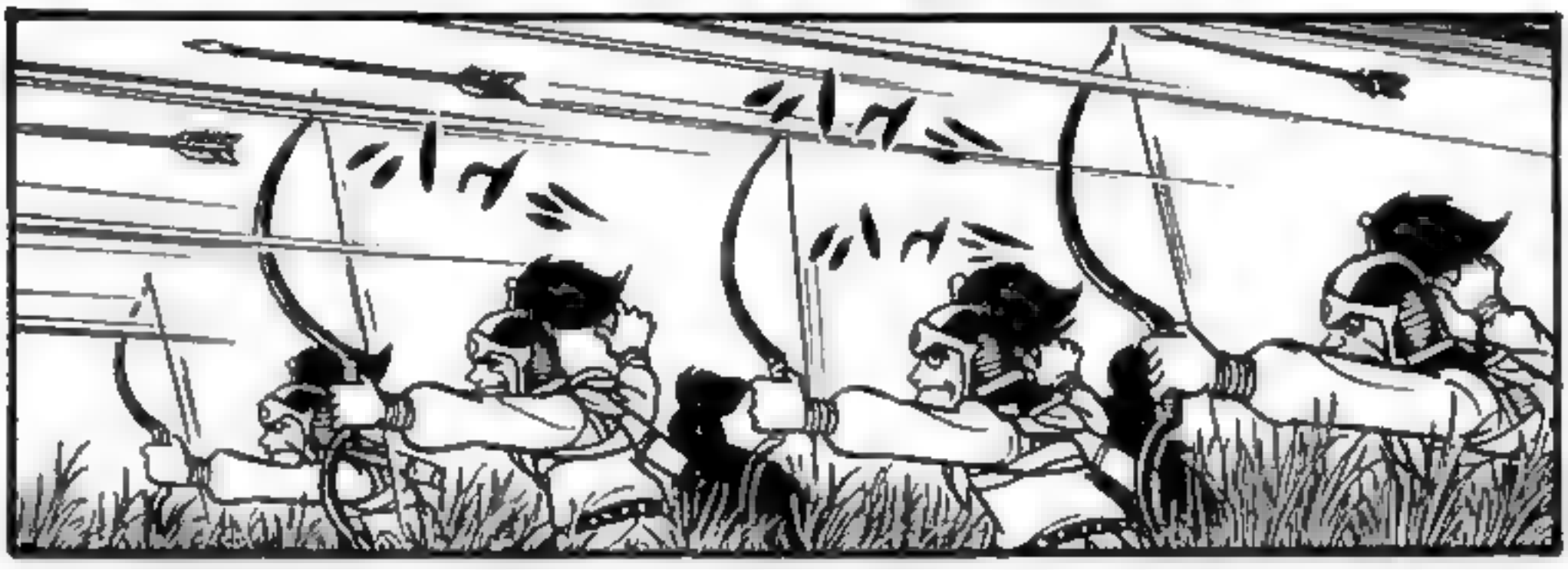


YES, MY LORD.
THE TRAPS ARE SET, I PRESUME?

YES, THE PLAN IS PROCEEDING EXACTLY AS WE PLANNED.
MY LORD, THE SIGNAL FIRE HAS BEEN LIT.

NOW!

THEY'RE HERE!



AGHH!

CURSES! IT'S AN AMBUSH!

WHAT!

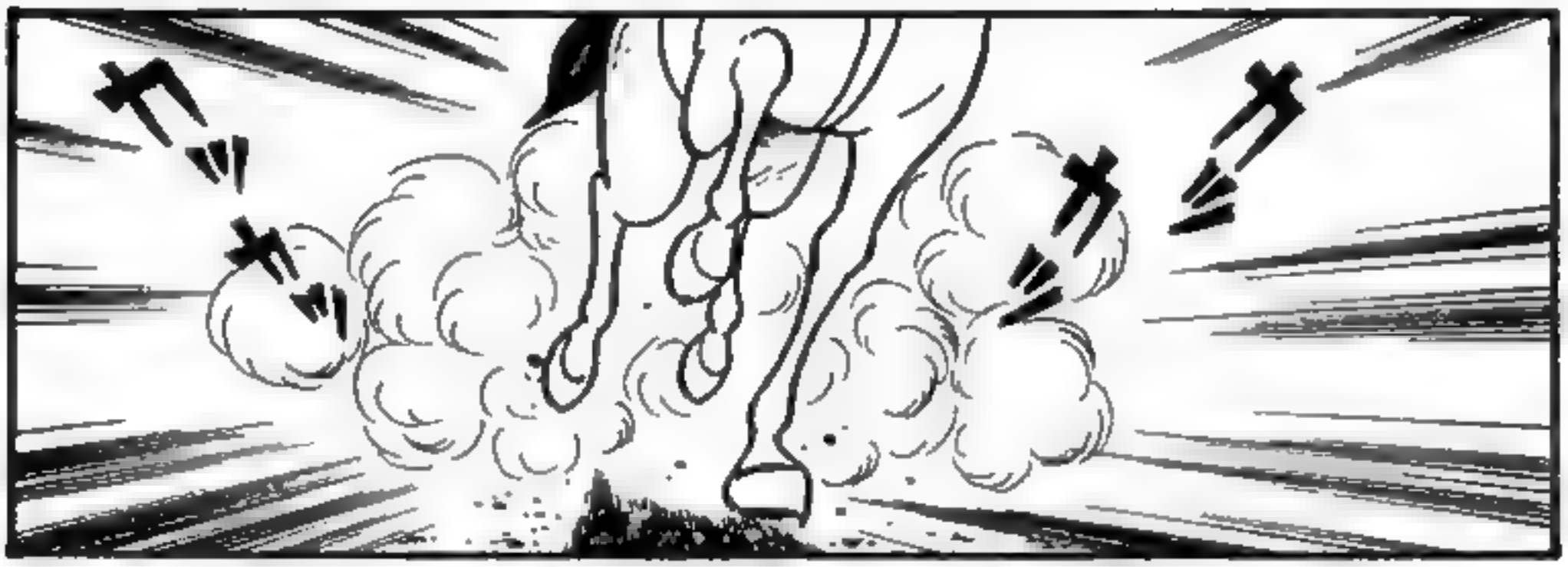
CLEAR THE WAY!

TO THINK THAT THEY WOULD BE LYING IN WAIT HERE ALREADY...

CLEAR THE WAY IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE SENT TO HELL!

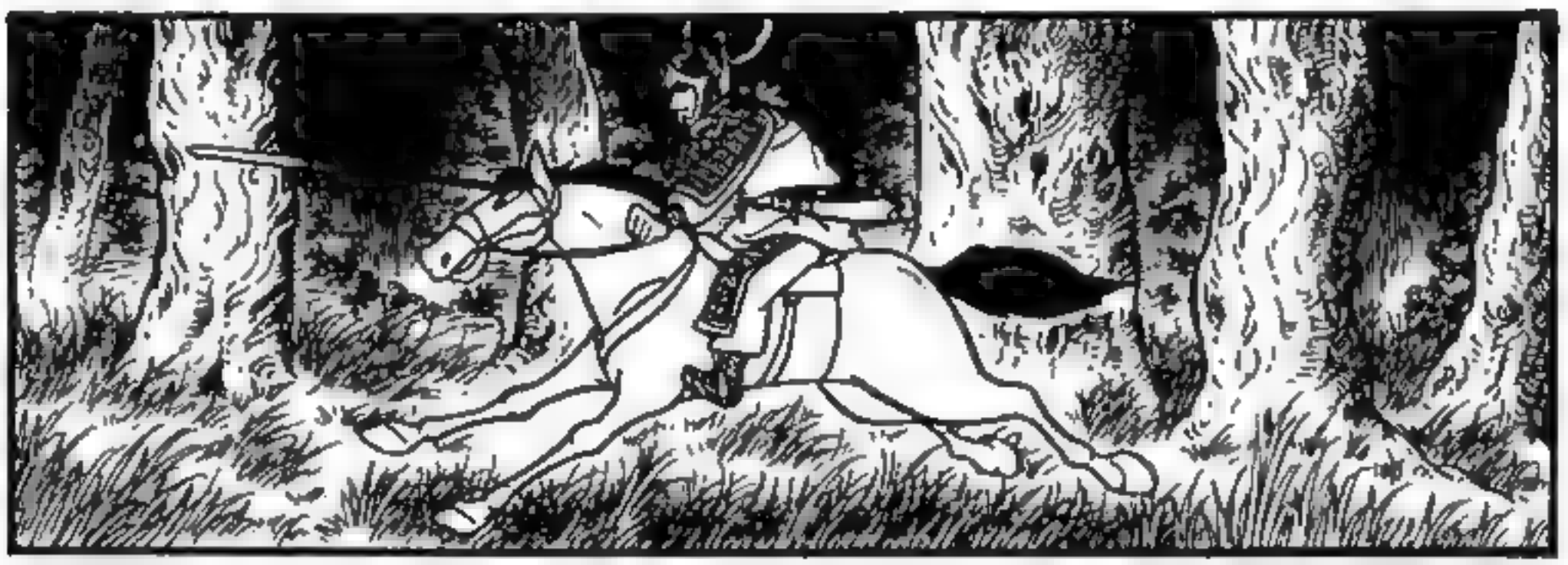
SEND THE SIGNAL!

NO WONDER OUR COMMANDER WISHES TO MAKE HIM A SUBORDINATE...! BUT HE WON'T BE ABLE TO RUN AWAY ANY LONGER!



THESE AREAS ARE THE SWAMPLANDS. I MUST PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO MY FOOTING...

DAMN, IT SEEMS I'VE LOST MY WAY...



AGHHH!

D-DAMN!

AGHHH!

GOOD EVENING, TAISHI CI. IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE WE LAST MET.

HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF THE SAYING, "'TIS HARD TO LIVE BUT EASY TO DIE?"

HAHA, THERE'S NO NEED TO RUSH TO YOUR DEATH SO SOON, IS THERE?

THERE'S NO NEED FOR FORMALITIES JUST CUT OFF MY HEAD AND BE DONE WITH IT!

BUT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED ABOUT.

I AM NO FOOL RUSHING TO HIS DEATH. CONSIDERING HOW I AM NOW JUST A PRISONER OF WAR, I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN TO LIVE ANOTHER SECOND WITH THIS SHAME!

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF TAKING YOUR HEAD NOR DISGRACING YOUR HONOUR AS A WARRIOR.

NOTHING? I AM A GENERAL THAT NOT ONLY HAS LOST IN BATTLE BUT HAS PERFECTLY FALLEN INTO AN ENEMY TRAP! SO ENOUGH MINCING WORDS AND KILL ME!

THE ONLY REASON WHY YOU ENDED UP LOSING TO ME WAS DUE TO YOUR LORD'S FOOLISHNESS.

YOU'VE FOUGHT VALIANTLY UNTIL THE VERY END UNLIKE YOUR OTHER COMRADES WHO'VE FLED OR SURRENDERED LONG AGO. I SEE NO GROUNDS FOR ONE TO INSULT OR HUMILIATE YOU IN ANY WAY.

AS THE SAYING GOES, A SILKWORM GROWN AMONG MAGGOTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PRODUCE PROPER SILK.

IT IS A PITY THAT LIU YAO FAILED TO SEE YOUR TRUE WORTH AND KEPT YOUR TALENTS IN FETTERS.

IN OTHER WORDS, I AM ASKING YOU TO BECOME MY SUBORDINATE.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND LIVE A MORE MEANINGFUL LIFE?

IT WOULD BE A GREAT WASTE FOR A MAN AS TALENTED AS YOU TO DIE A DOG'S DEATH HERE. SO WILL YOU AGREE TO WORK FOR ME AND THE PEOPLE'S WILL?

EXCELLENT.

I UNDERSTAND... I DO NOT KNOW IF I CAN REALLY BE OF ANY USE, BUT I SHALL AGREE TO BECOME YOUR SUBORDINATE.

LET US HAVE A GLASS TOGETHER THEN TO CELEBRATE.

PLEASE, COME INSIDE.

HA HA HA HA HA!

HA HA HA HA HA!

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF YOU HAD SUCCESS-FULLY CAPTURED ME BACK THEN? WOULD YOU HAVE TAKEN MY HEAD?

HMM, WHO CAN SAY... A BATTLE IS AN UNPREDICT-ABLE THING THAT EASILY CHANGES DEPENDING ON TIME AND PLACE. THERE IS NO WAY TO SAY FOR SURE.

HAHA. BUT YOU KNOW, I'M SURE I WOULD HAVE WON OUR DUEL BACK IN SHENTING HILLS HAD THERE BEEN JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME.

YES, I'M QUITE CERTAIN I WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU ON THE SPOT.

HAHAHA! YES, OF COURSE.

EVEN IF I WISHED TO SPARE YOUR LIFE, I'M SURE MY LORD LIU YAO WOULD HAVE FORBID ME FROM DOING SUCH A THING.

IN THAT CASE, I HAVE ONE REQUEST TO ASK OF YOU RIGHT NOW.

IN ANY CASE, I WILL BE EXPECTING GREAT THINGS FROM YOU IN THE FUTURE.

THOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN DEFEATED AND ARE DISPIRITED, THERE ARE MANY GOOD SOLDIERS AND CAPTAINS AMONGST THESE MEN.

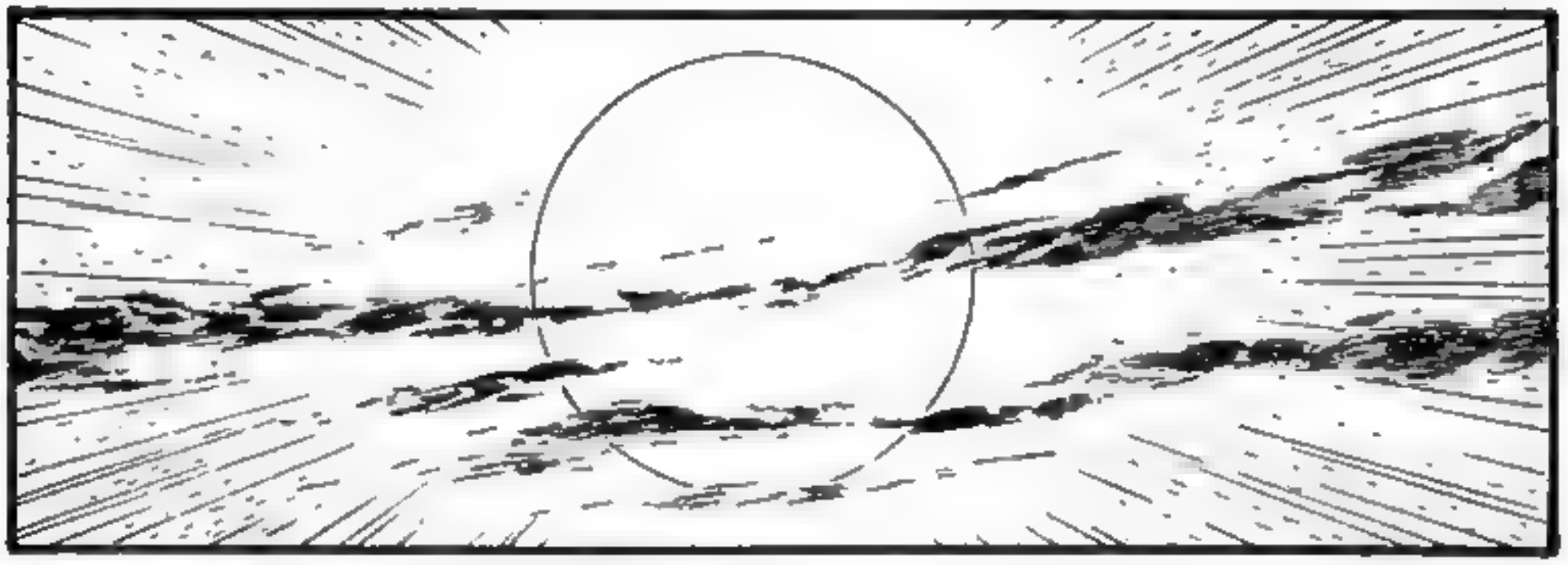
THE REMNANTS OF LIU YAO'S FORCES ARE NOW SCATTERED AMONG THESE REGIONS.

AND WHAT IS THAT?

INTERE-STING...

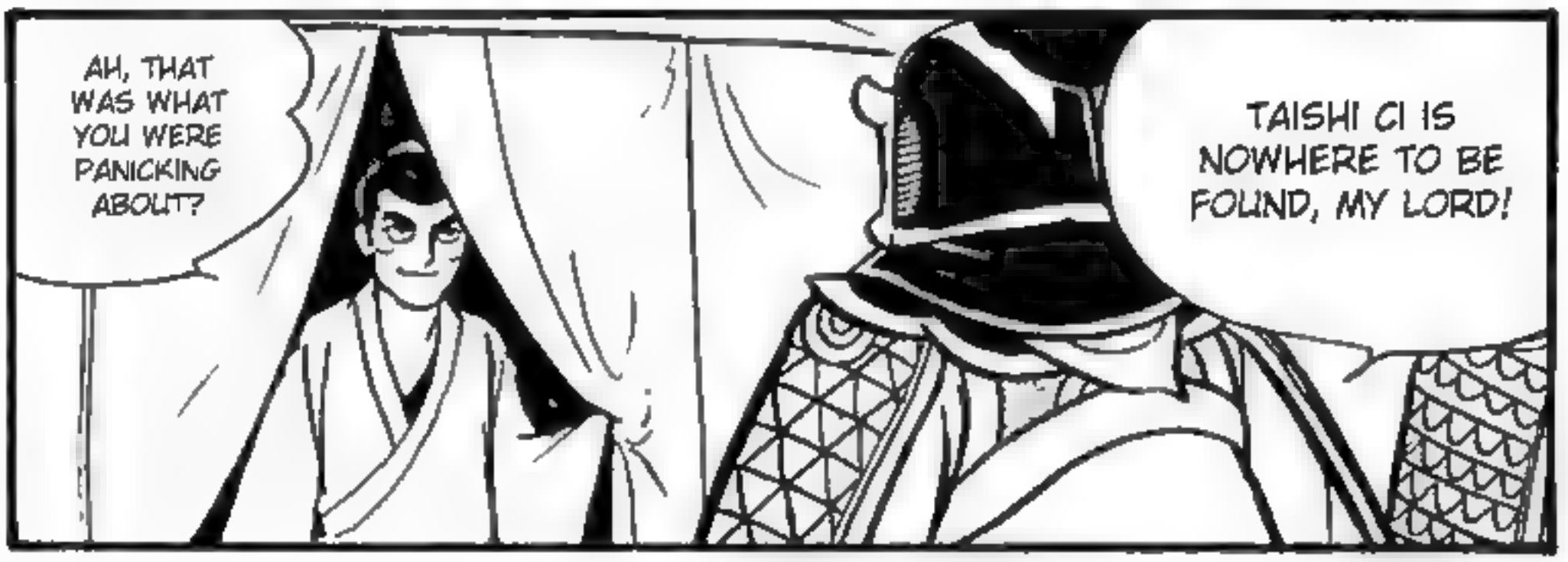
IF YOU WOULD JUST GRANT ME 3 DAYS OF FREEDOM, THEN I SHALL GO FORTH TO BRING BACK 3000 OF THE BEST SOLDIERS AND CAPTAINS AMONG THEM. THEY WILL PROVE TO BE AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO YOUR ARMY.

ALRIGHT, I SHALL GRANT YOU YOUR 3 DAYS OF FREEDOM.



WHAT IS IT AT THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING?

MY LORD! IT'S AN EMERGENCY!


AH, THAT WAS WHAT YOU WERE PANICKING ABOUT?
TAISHI CI IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND, MY LORD!

HE ASKED TO BE LET FREE FOR 3 DAYS TO GO GATHER SOME TROOPS AND SO I AGREED.

MY LORD! THAT WAS MERELY AN EXCUSE FOR HIM TO ESCAPE!

YES, OF COURSE.
AND... MY LORD BELIEVED HIS WORDS...?

YES, I AGREE. I DO NOT EXPECT TAISHI CI TO EVER RETURN AGAIN.

THEN THAT MEANS HE WASN'T A WORTHY SUBORDINATE TO KEEP.
AND EVEN IF HE WERE TO BREAK HIS PROMISE AND NEVER RETURN,

NO, NO. I'M QUITE CERTAIN HE WILL RETURN. I ONLY MADE HIM MY SUBORDINATE BECAUSE I THOUGHT OF HIM AS SUCH A MAN TO KEEP HIS WORD.

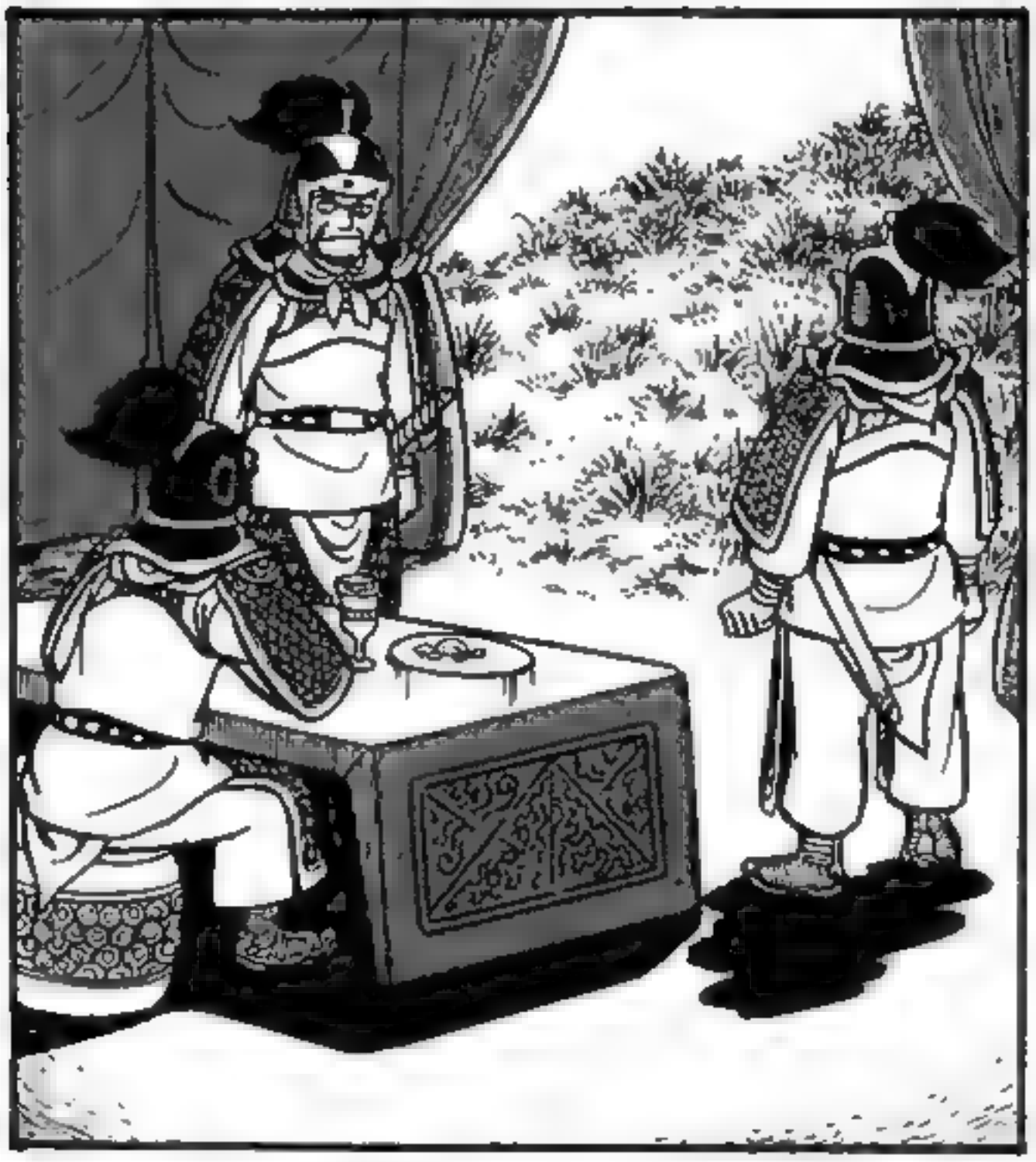
YAWNN...! I THINK I HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH TO DRINK LAST NIGHT...

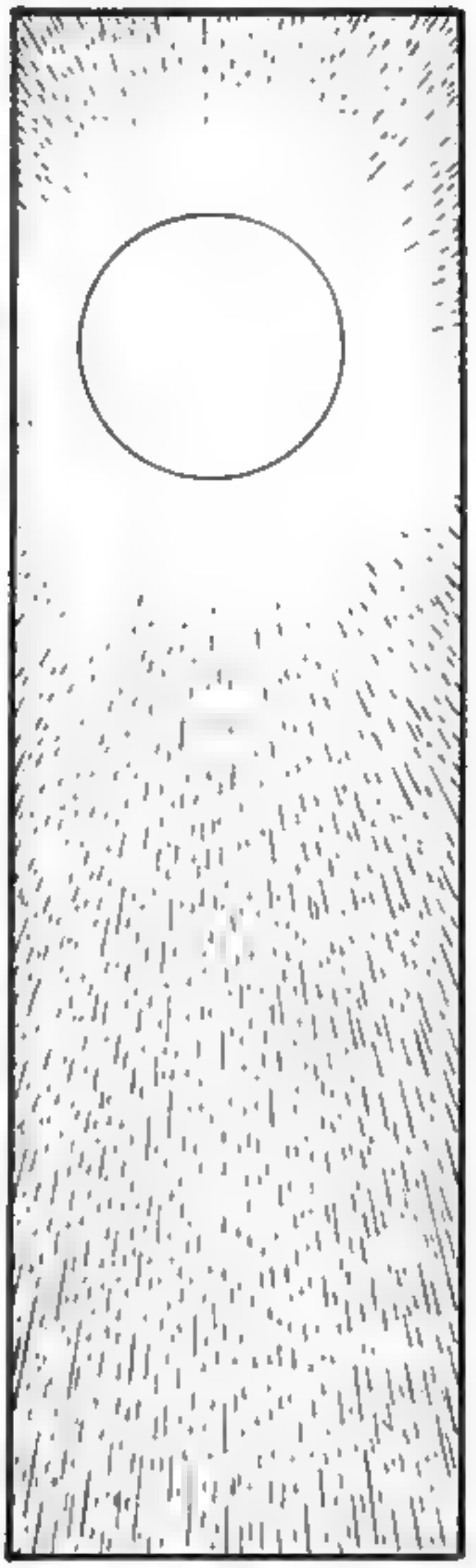
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER MY LORD IS JUST GENEROUS OR FOOLISHLY PRESUMPTUOUS...

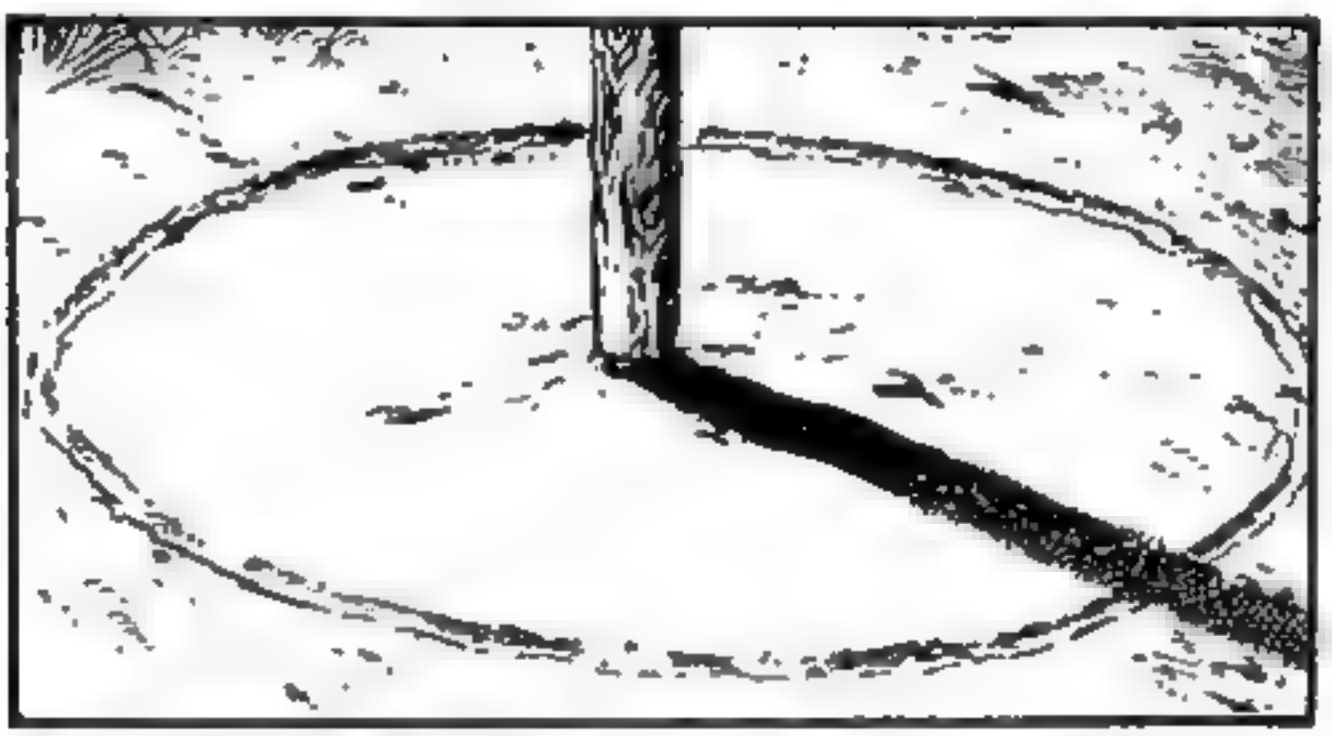
SET UP A SUNDIAL.

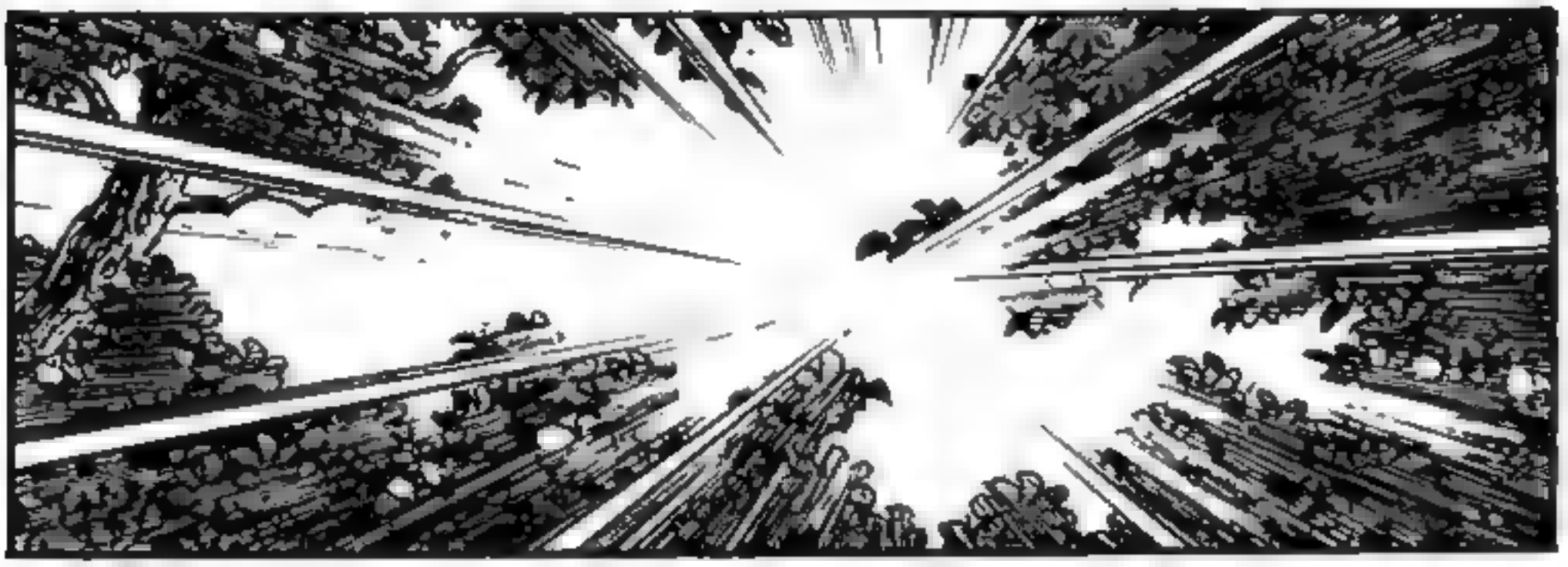
YES, I KNOW.
TODAY'S THE 3RD DAY, MY LORD.

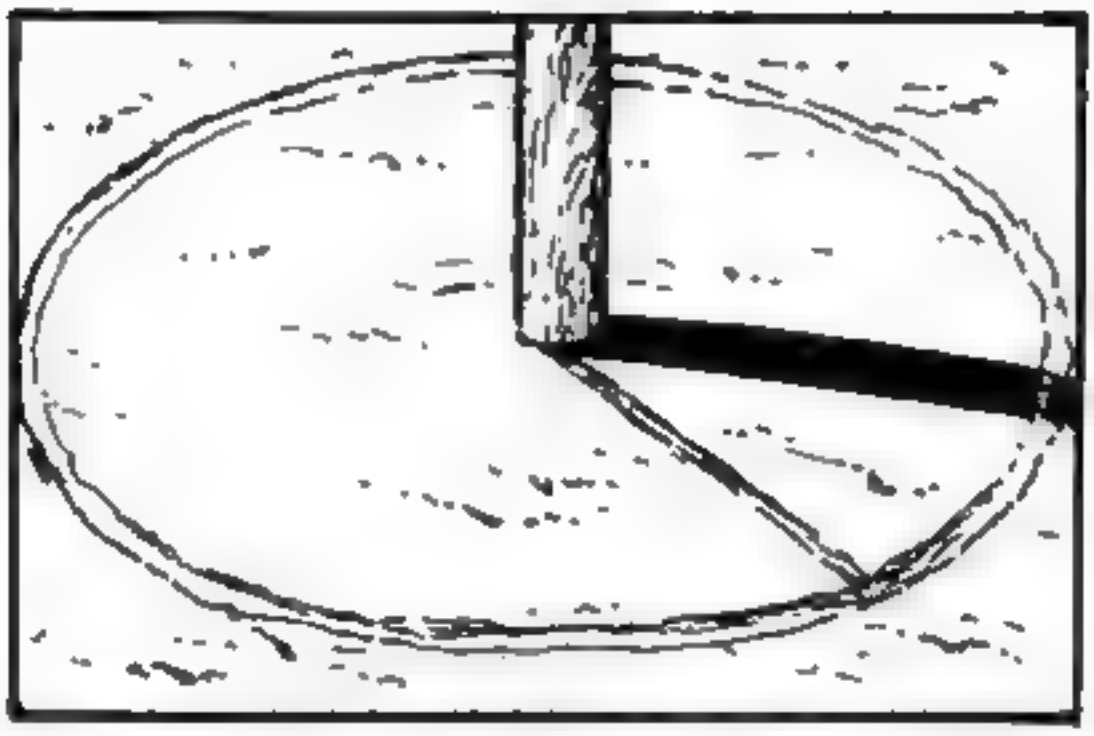
MARK THE LINE RIGHT HERE WHERE I'M STANDING. IF TAISHI CI DOES NOT RETURN BY THE TIME THE SHADOW FALLS ON THE MARK, THEN I HAVE MISJUDGED HIM.

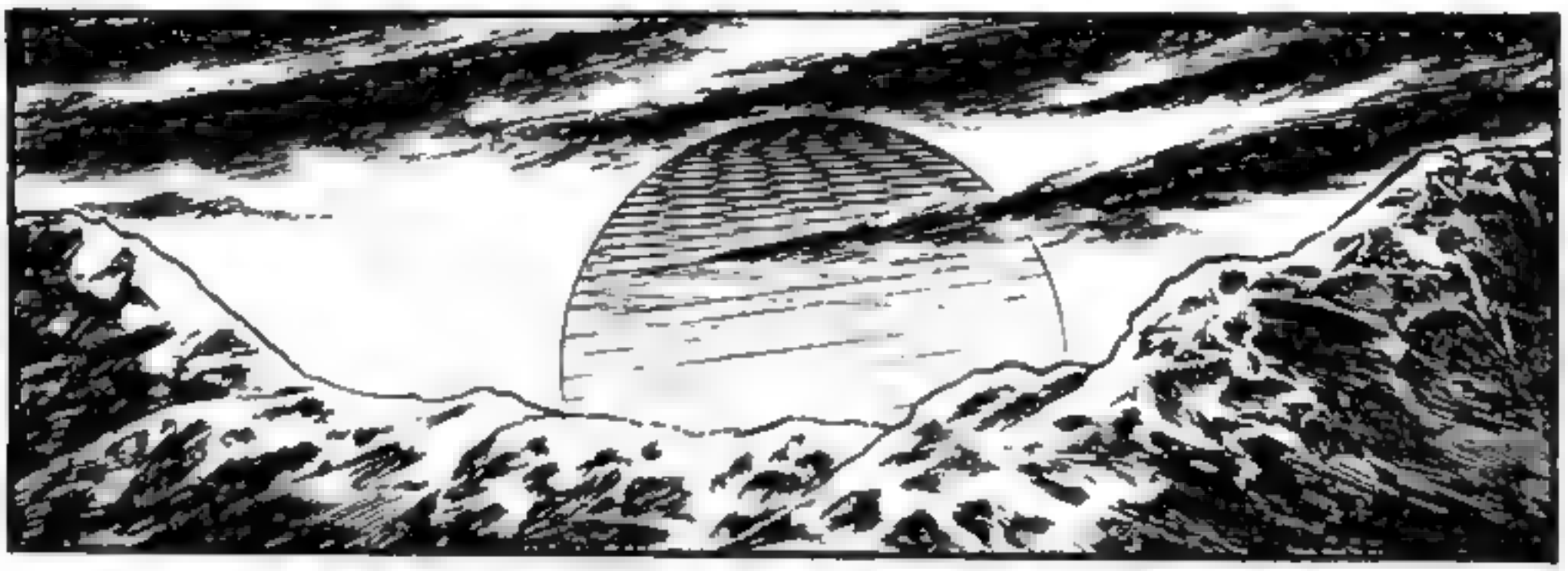




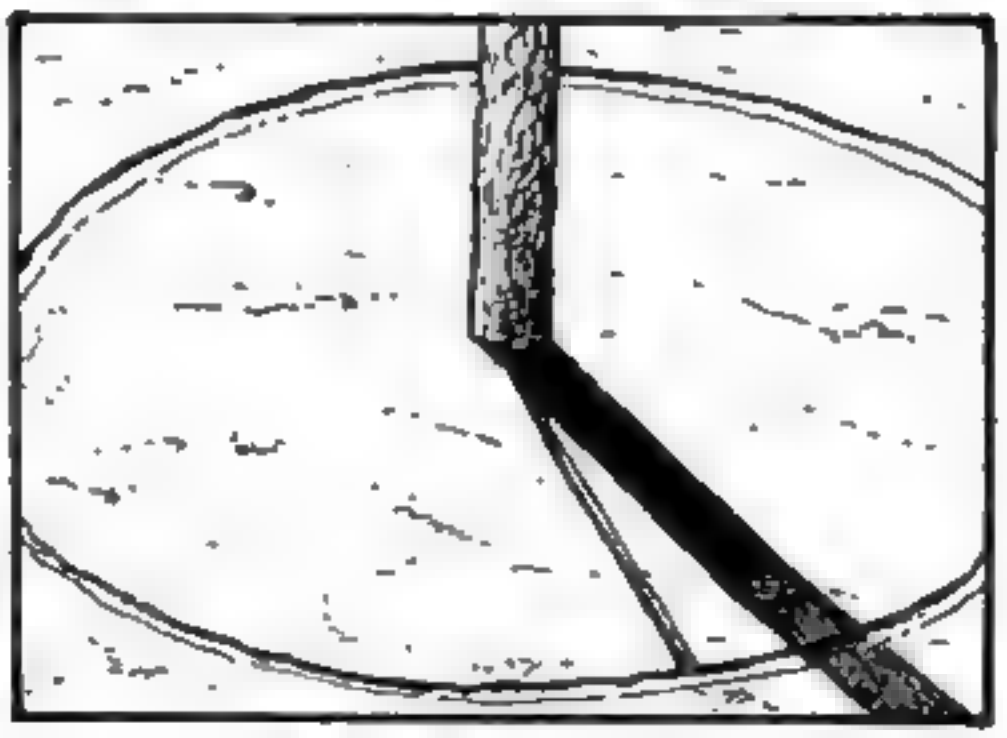




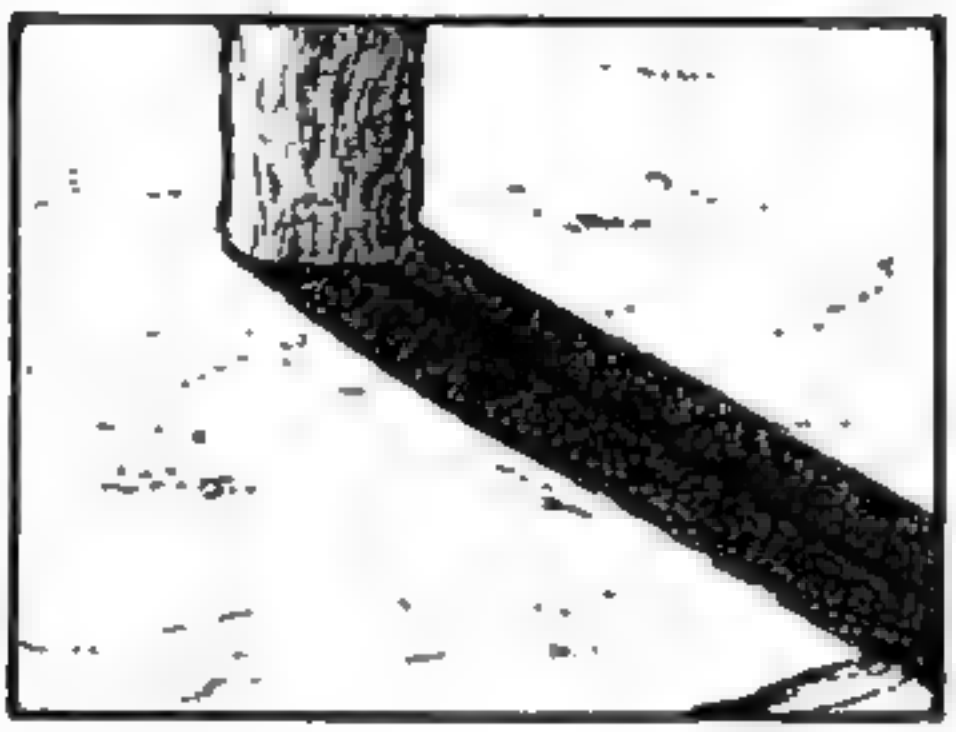




THE SHADOW HAS ALMOST REACHED THE MARK...



.....
IT IS NOW THE APPOINTED TIME, MY LORD.



MY LORD! THERE ARE TROOPS HEADING THIS WAY!

OHH!

.....

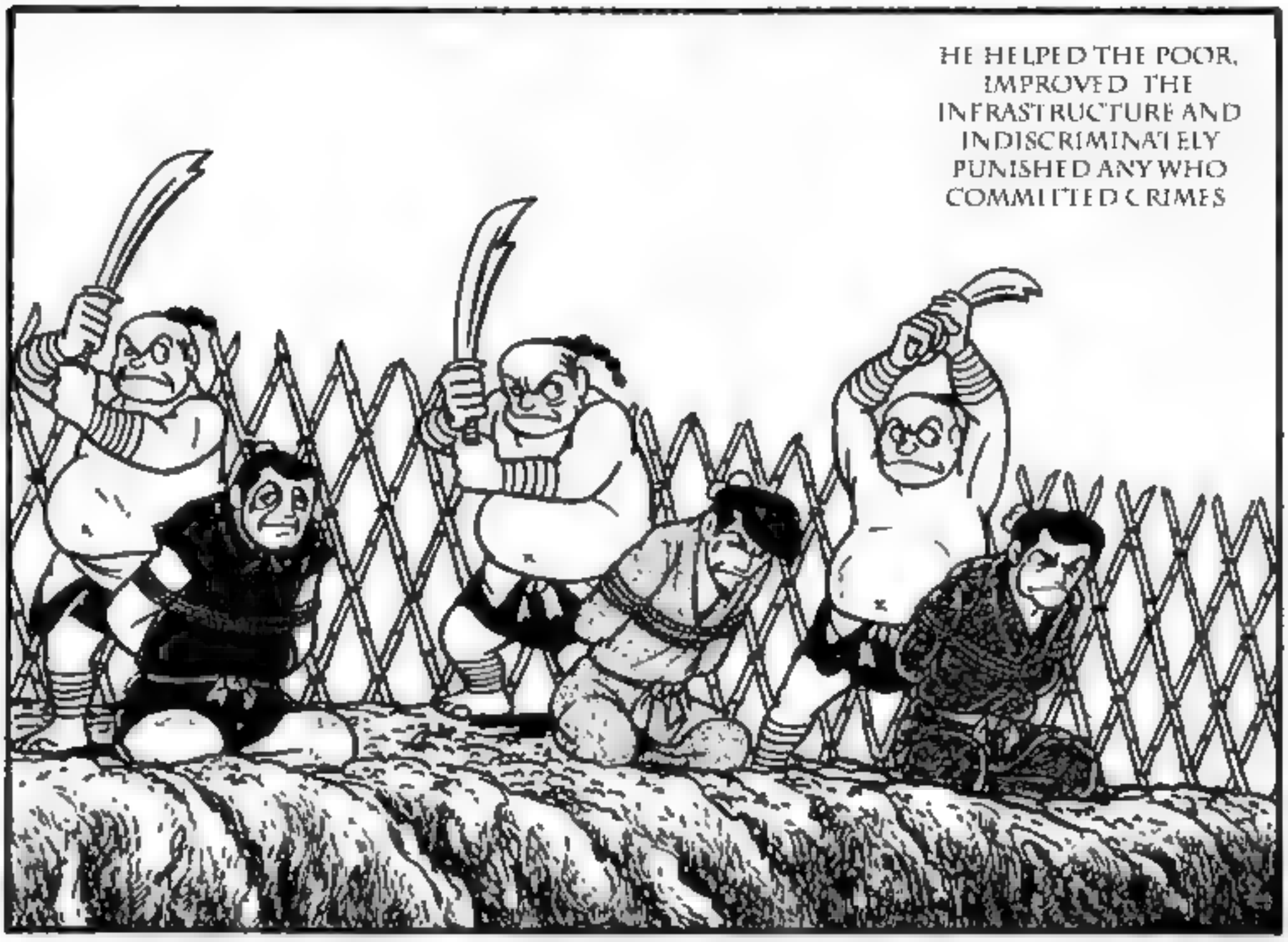
LOOK! HE KEPT HIS WORD AND BROUGHT BACK 3000 SOLDIERS.

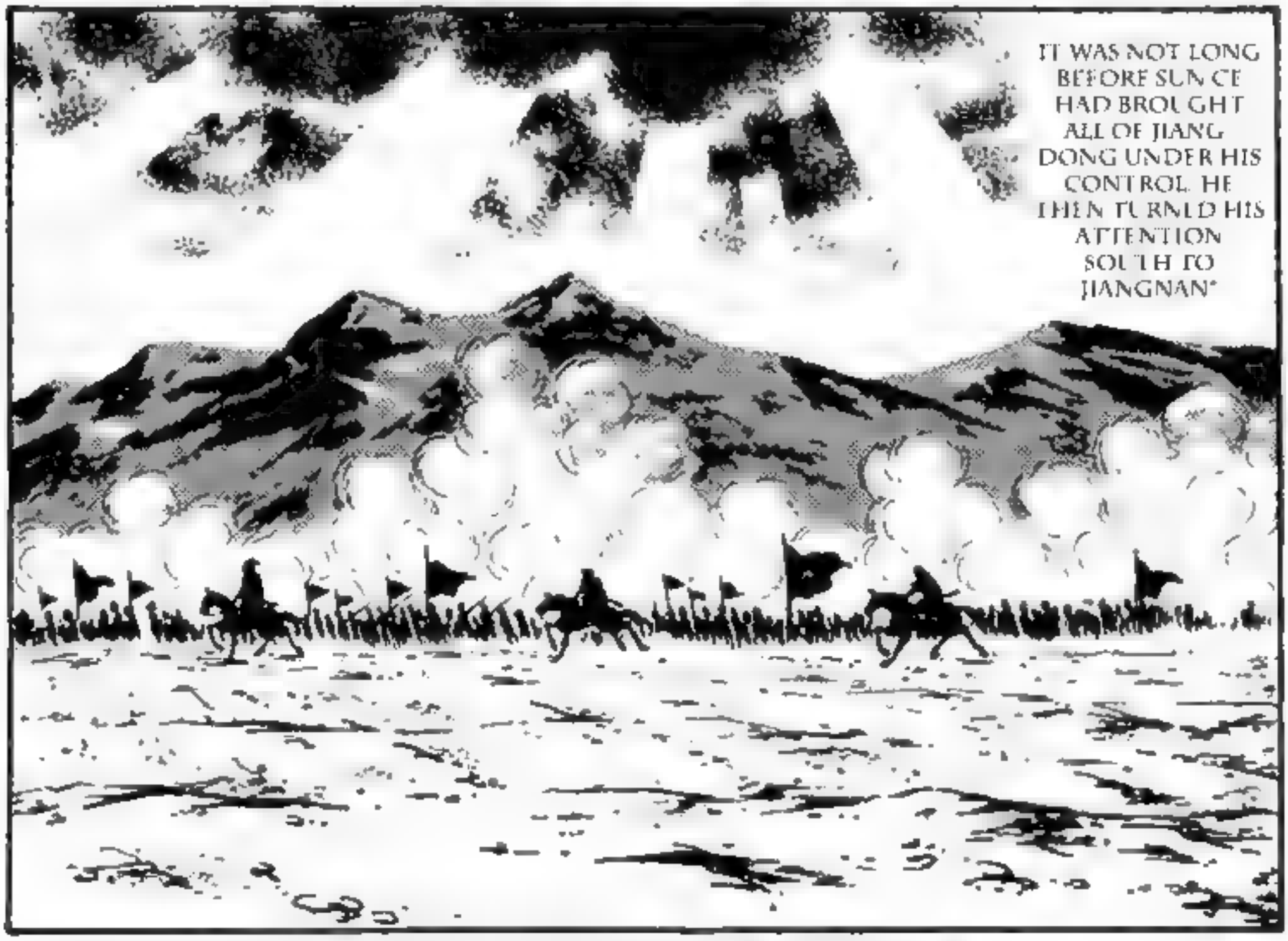
IT WAS QUITE ASTONISHING THAT DESPITE HIS AGE, SUN CE CORRECTLY JUDGED A MAN'S WORTH FROM A GLANCE. BUT OF COURSE, TAISHI CI, WHO HAD MANAGED TO CONVINCE 3000 MEN TO JOIN SUN CE AND BRING THEM BACK IN ONLY 3 DAYS WAS EQUALLY AS IMPRESSIVE

A NEW WAVE

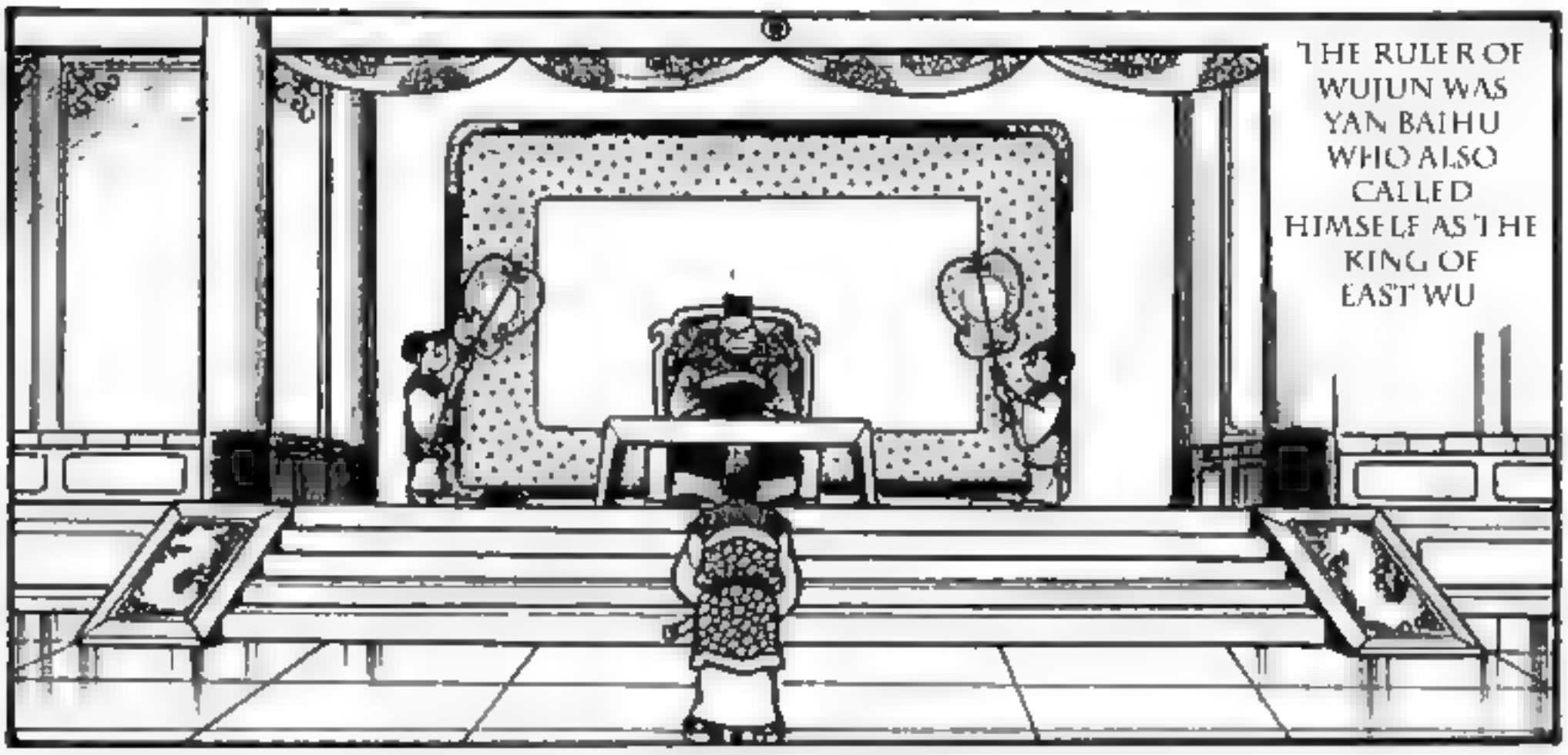
THEY CEASELESSLY ADVANCED AND WON VICTORY AFTER VICTORY OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELDS
THEIR MIGHT WAS SOON KNOWN ALL ACROSS SOUTHEASTERN CHINA.

FOR EVERY CITY AND CASTLE CONQUERED, SUN CE PRIORITIZED IN RESTORING PUBLIC ORDER AND WINNING THE PEOPLE'S SUPPORT


HE HELPED THE POOR, IMPROVED THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDISCRIMINATELY PUNISHED ANY WHO COMMITTED CRIMES


IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE SUN CE HAD BROUGHT ALL OF JIANG DONG UNDER HIS CONTROL. HE THEN TURNED HIS ATTENTION SOUTH TO JIANGNAN*

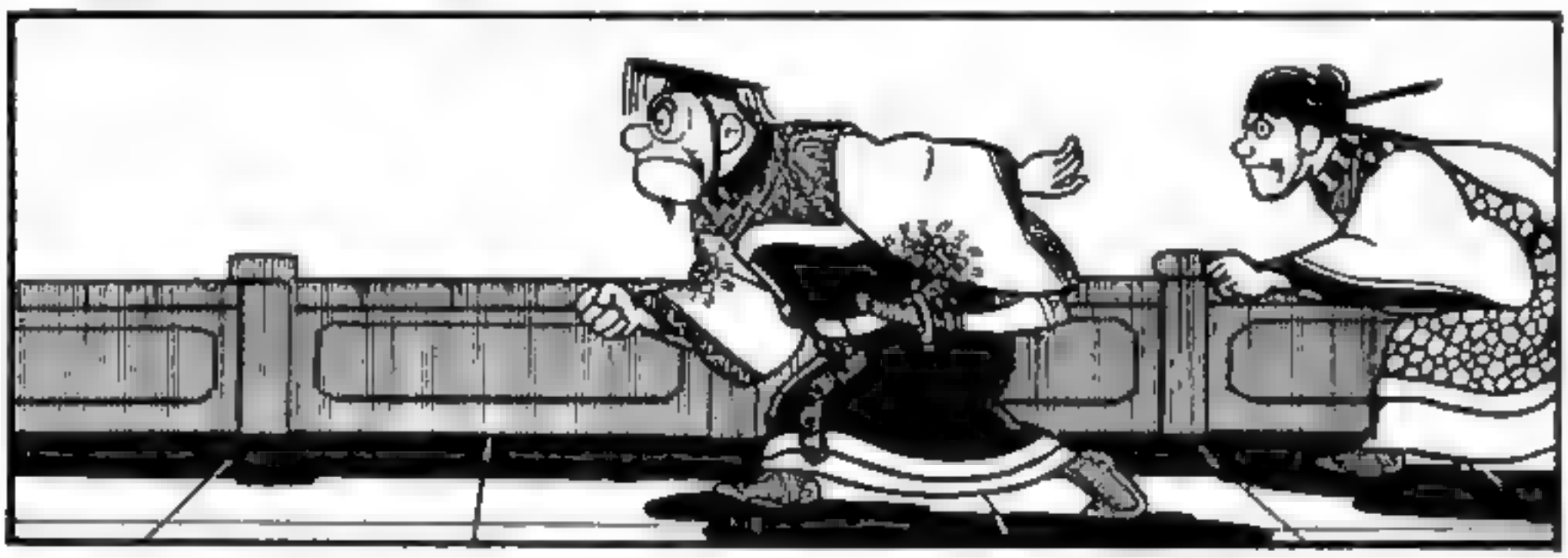
*JIANGDONG REFERS TO REGIONS IN CHINA EAST OF THE YANGTZE RIVER WHILE JIANGNAN REFERS TO THE LANDS SOUTH OF THE YANGTZE RIVER.

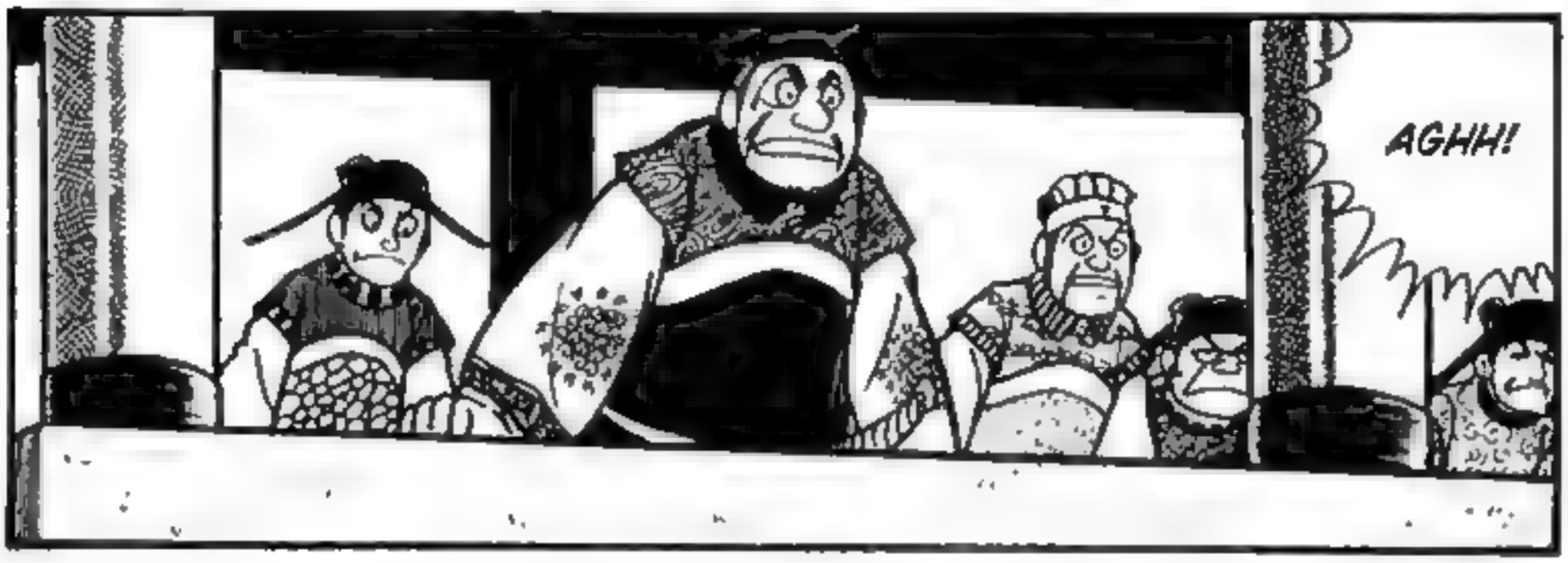


*YAN BAIHU DIRECTLY TRANSLATES TO WHITE TIGER OF YAN

THAT ARROGANT SNOT-NOSED YOUNGSTER...!

YES, YOUR HIGHNESS
WHAT!? SUN CE'S ARMY IS COMING HERE TO ATTACK WUJUN!?




AGHH!

ORIGINALLY YES, YOUR HIGHNESS. BUT HE HAS SINCE GAINED MANY NEW RECRUITS AFTER CONQUERING THE LANDS OF JIANGDONG.

WHA...! WASN'T HE ONLY SUPPOSED TO HAVE AN ARMY OF 3000 SOLDIERS BORROWED FROM YUAN SHU...!?

OUR OPPONENTS ARE NOT ONLY FIERCE BUT HAVE HIGH MORALE. SIMPLY FIGHTING THEM HEAD-ON WILL BE DISASTROUS.

THEN ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT WE SURRENDER...!?

PRUDENTLY...?

BROTHER, WE MUST PRUDENTLY DEAL WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION.

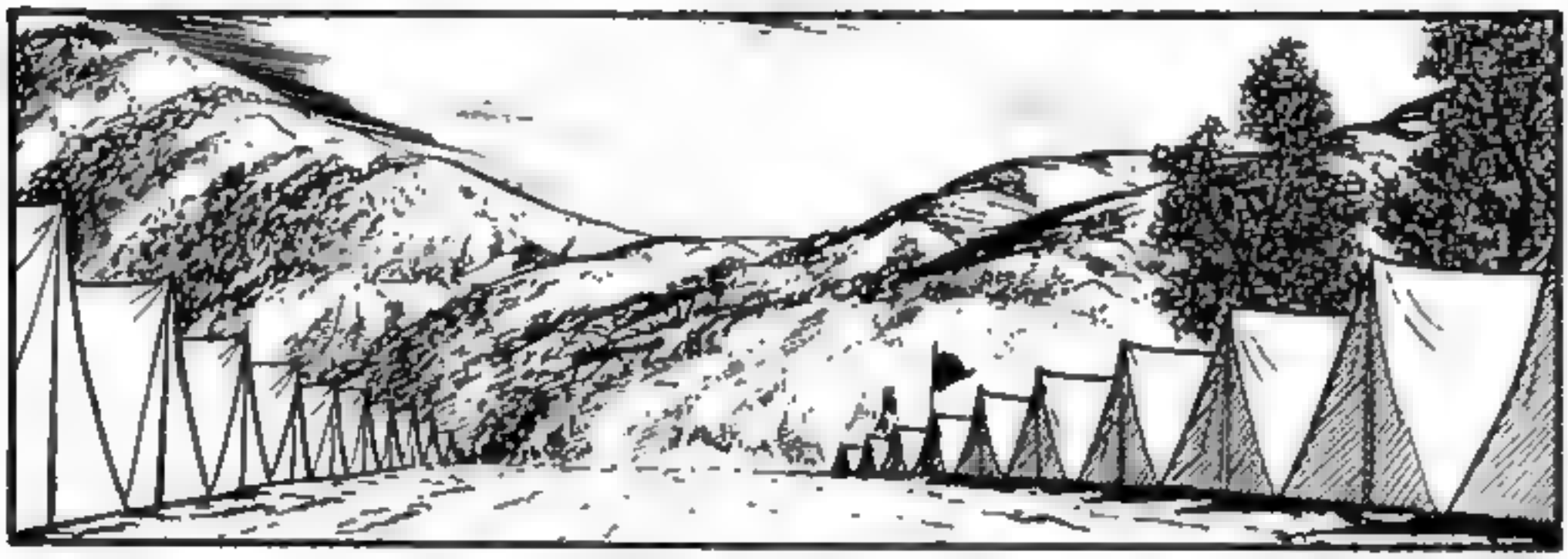
NO, I AM NOT SUGGESTING ANYTHING OF THAT SORT. SUN CE MAY BE A FIERCE WARRIOR BUT HE IS STILL YOUNG AND NAIVE. I BELIEVE THAT HE CAN EASILY BE DISTRACTED WITH A LITTLE OFFERING.

ATTACK WHEN THEY LEAST EXPECT IT, HUH? GOOD IDEA, YAN YU...

HMM...

I BELIEVE WE SHOULD CALL FOR A TRUCE IN THE MEAN TIME AND THEN LATER SECRETLY ATTACK

YES, BROTHER.
ALRIGHT THEN! GO MEET WITH SUN CE TO SETTLE A TRUCE.



MY LORD! WUJUN'S KING, YAN BAIHU HAS SENT HIS YOUNGER BROTHER AS A MESSENGER.

I AM YAN YU, THE YOUNGER BROTHER OF EAST WU'S KING.

AND I AM SUN CE.

YES, THANK YOU.

IT WOULD HARDLY BE APRROPRIATE TO DISCUSS MATTERS OUT HERE. PLEASE COME INTO MY TENT.

BUT A BRAT IS A BRAT. HE'S PROBABLY STILL HEAD OVER HEELS IN BLISS AFTER FINALLY OBTAINING AN ARMY OF HIS OWN. I'M CONFIDENT HE CAN EASILY BE DECEIVED...

HE'S CERTAINLY QUITE IMPOSING... NO WONDER HE'S CALLED THE LITTLE CONQUEROR OF JIANGDONG.

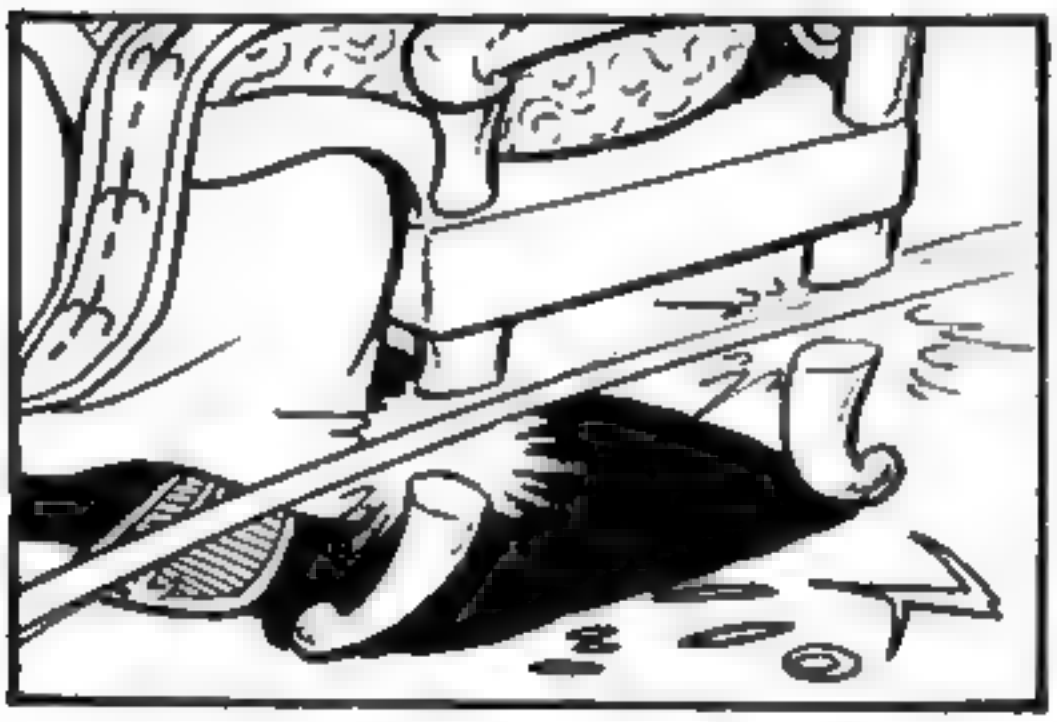
I THANK YOU KINDLY.

PLEASE, TAKE A SEAT.

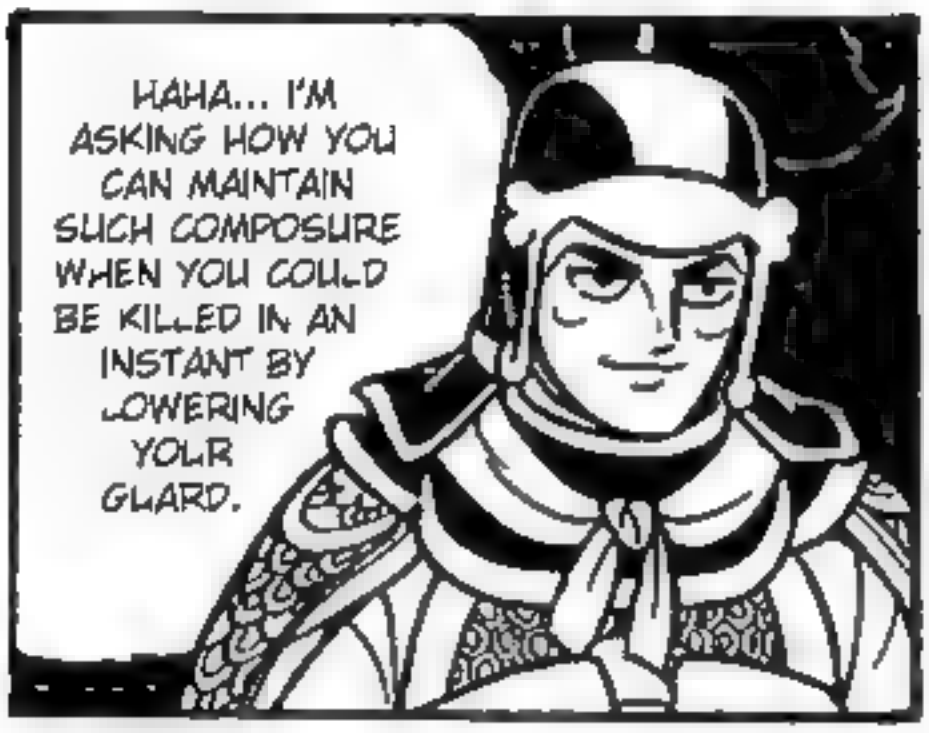
POUR OUR ESTEEMED GUEST A GLASS.

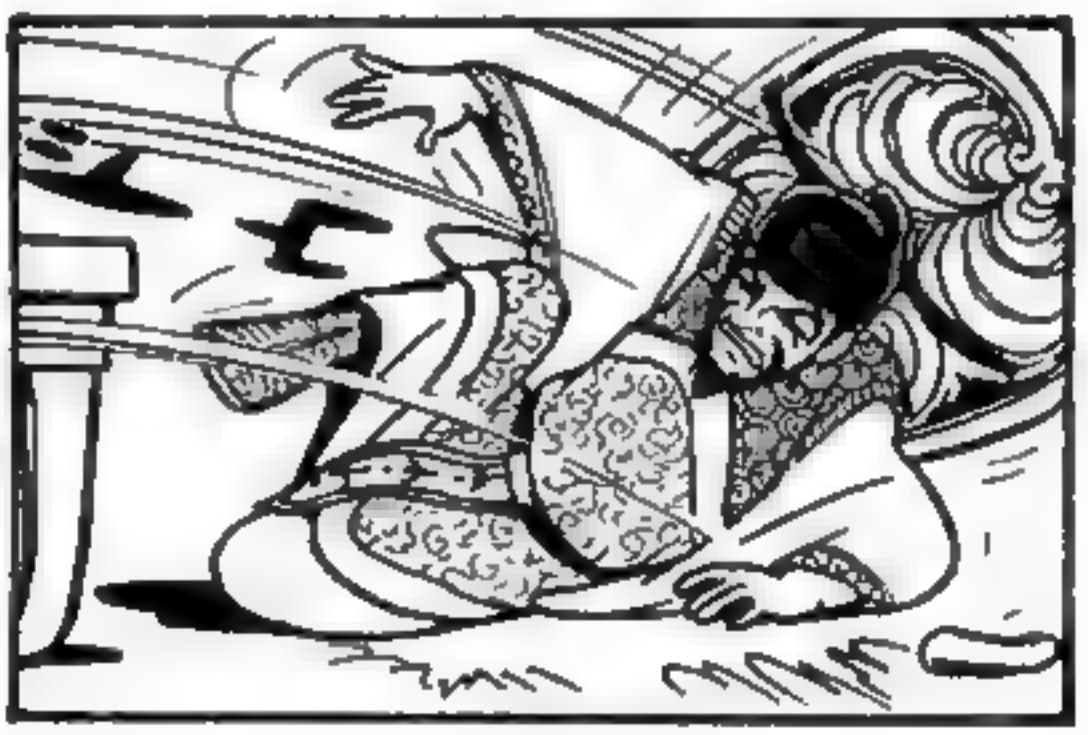
WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN...?

?
I MUST SAY I'M QUITE CURIOUS AS TO HOW CALM YOU CAN BE RIGHT NOW.



I MEAN... THIS!


HAHA... I'M ASKING HOW YOU CAN MAINTAIN SUCH COMPOSURE WHEN YOU COULD BE KILLED IN AN INSTANT BY LOWERING YOUR GUARD.



IN ANY CASE, WHAT DID YAO BAIHU WISH TO TELL ME?

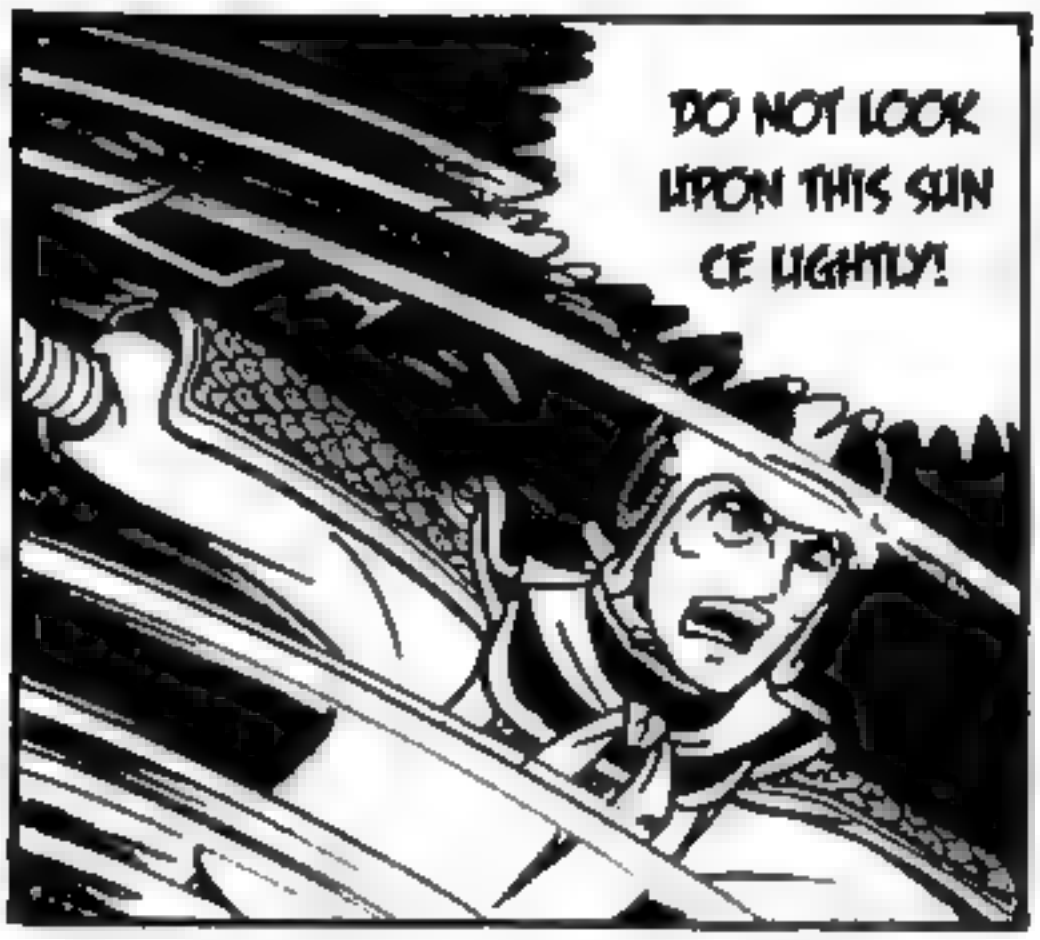
HE WISHES TO CALL A TRUCE...

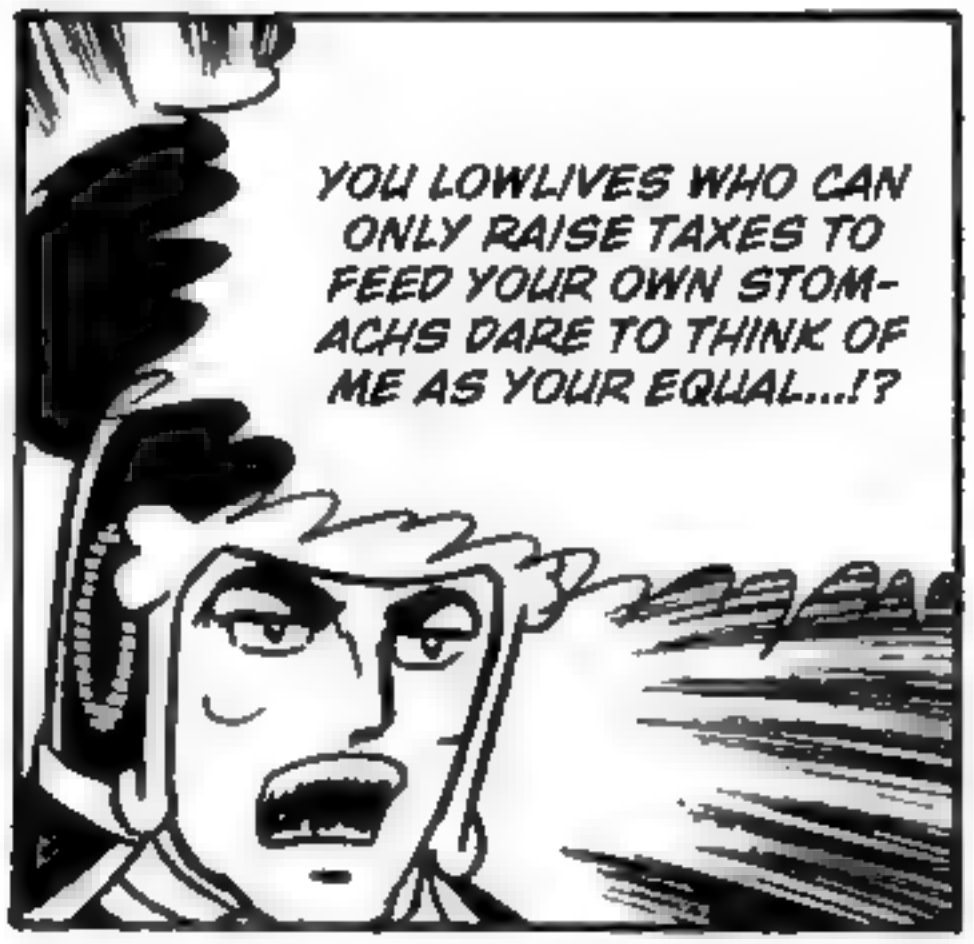
HAHAHA... IT'S JUST A BAD JOKE OF MINE, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

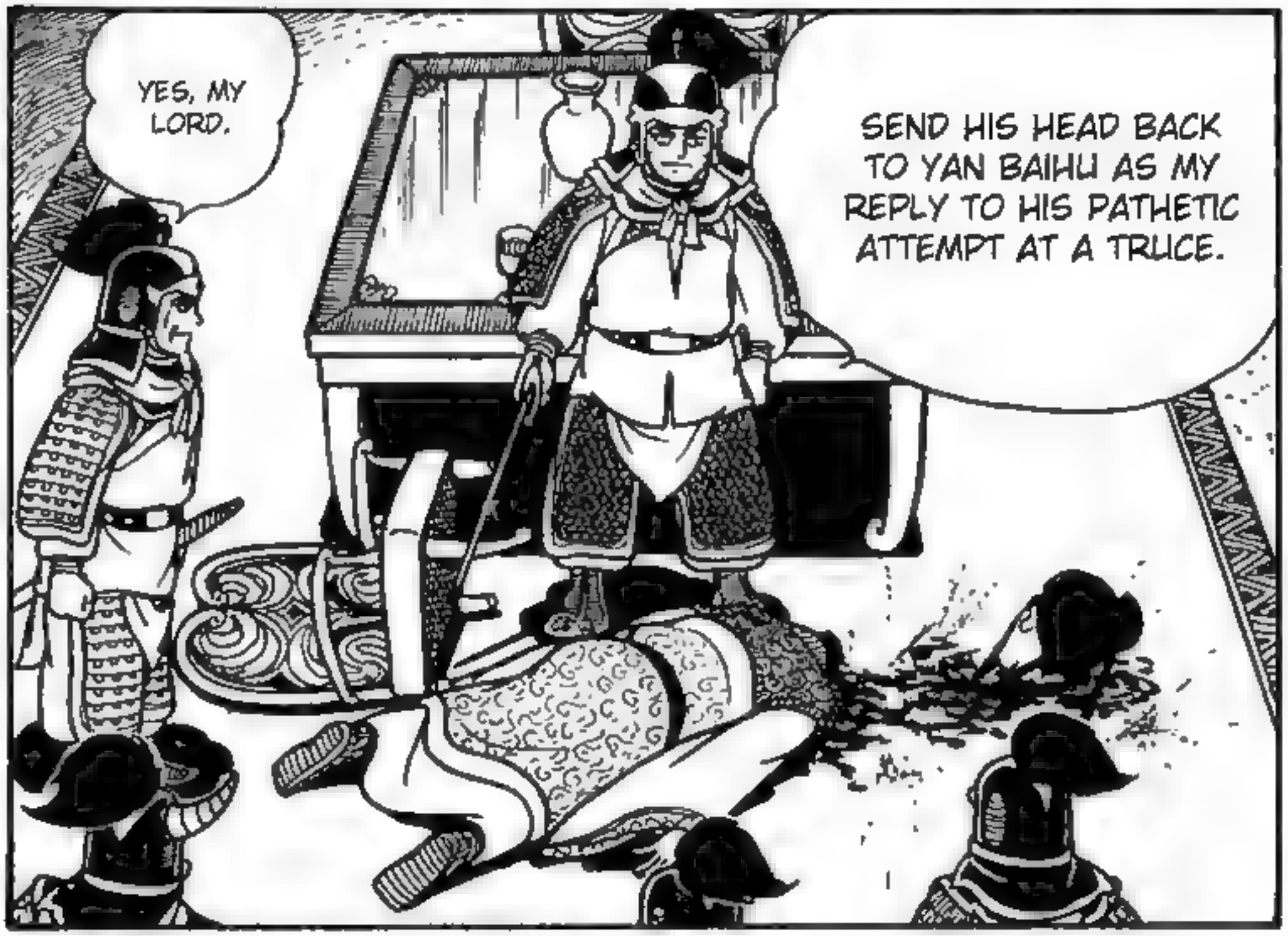
EQUALLY...?

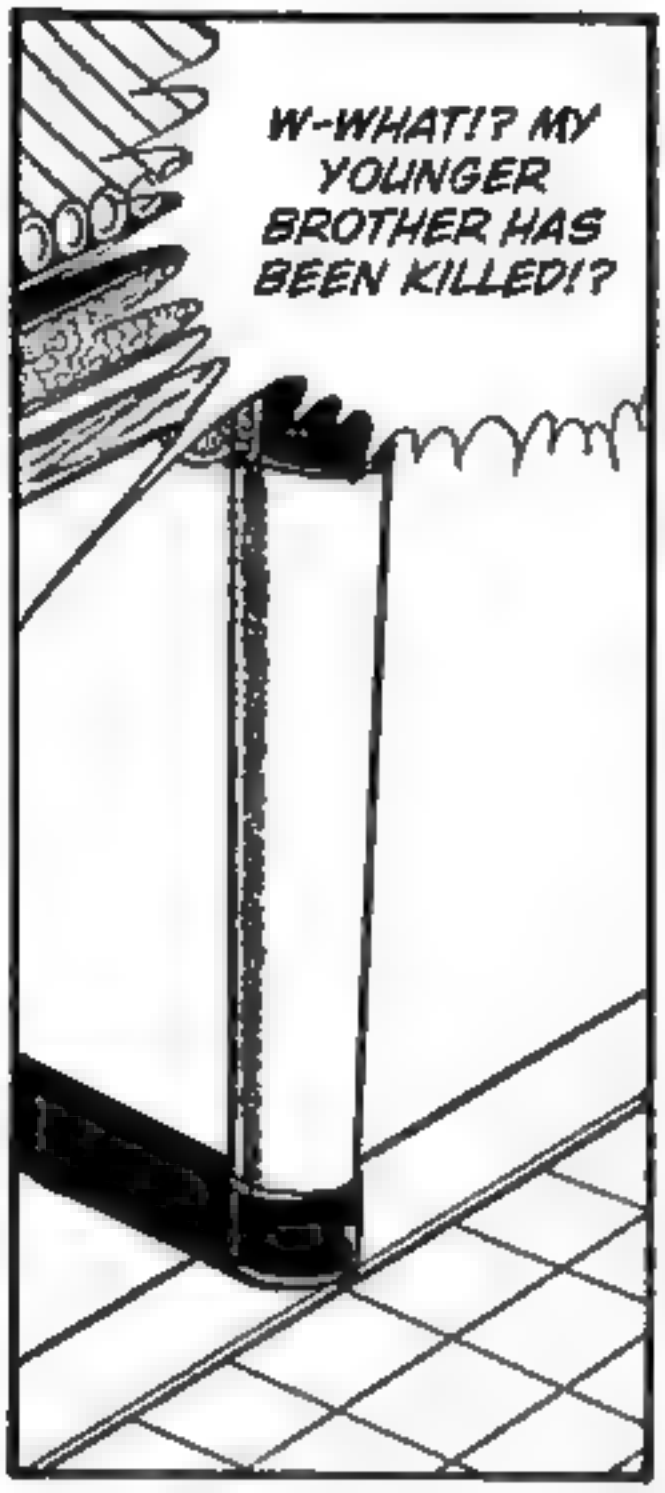
RATHER THAN NEEDLESSLY SHEDDING BLOOD, MY BROTHER WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE A TRUCE. IN RETURN, HE PROMISES TO SHARE HIS TERRITORY EQUALLY WITH YOU...

HE DARES TO THINK OF HIMSELF ON EQUAL GROUNDS WITH ME!?


DO NOT LOOK UPON THIS SUN CE LIGHTLY!


YOU LOWLIVES WHO CAN ONLY RAISE TAXES TO FEED YOUR OWN STOM-ACHS DARE TO THINK OF ME AS YOUR EQUAL...!?


YES, MY LORD.
SEND HIS HEAD BACK TO YAN BAIHU AS MY REPLY TO HIS PATHETIC ATTEMPT AT A TRUCE.


W-WHAT!? MY YOUNGER BROTHER HAS BEEN KILLED!?

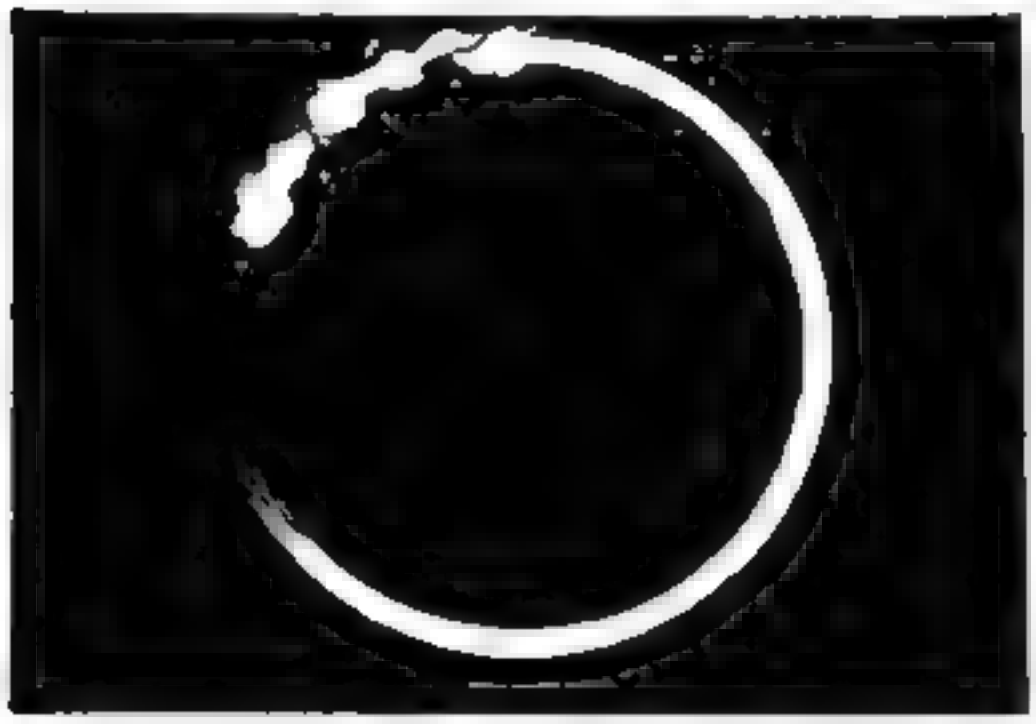
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS. SUN CE SENT BACK THIS HEAD AS HIS REPLY.

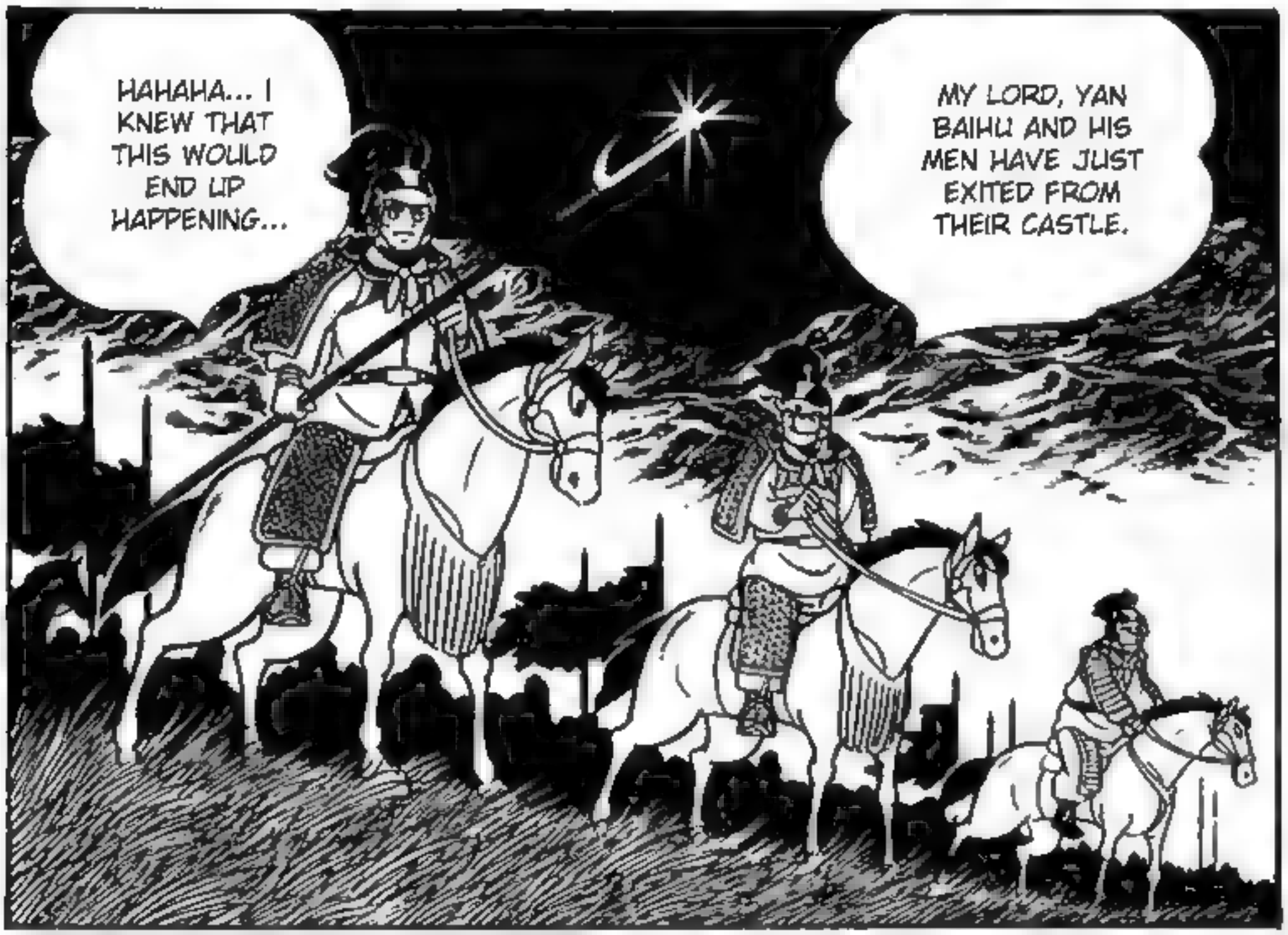
AT THIS VERY MOMENT, YAN BAIHU WAS NEITHER ANGRY NOR DID HE WISH FOR VENGEANCE, FOR HIS MIND HAD FROZEN FROM FEAR
AGHH...!

WE CANNOT HOPE TO HOLD OUT AGAINST SUN CE'S FORCES ALONE HERE. WE MUST FLEE TO KUAIJI FOR THE TIME BEING.

I AM ON GOOD TERMS WITH WANG LANG, THE GOVERNOR OF KUAIJI. THERE, I SHALL TEAM UP WITH HIM AND HIS SKILLED GENERALS TO BRING DOWN SUN CE!

NOW HURRY! WE MUST SECRETLY MAKE OUR ESCAPE FROM HERE WHILE SUN CE'S FORCES ARE STILL ASLEEP!




HAHAHA... I KNEW THAT THIS WOULD END UP HAPPENING...
MY LORD, YAN BAIHU AND HIS MEN HAVE JUST EXITED FROM THEIR CASTLE.

NOW!
CHARGE!

AH!

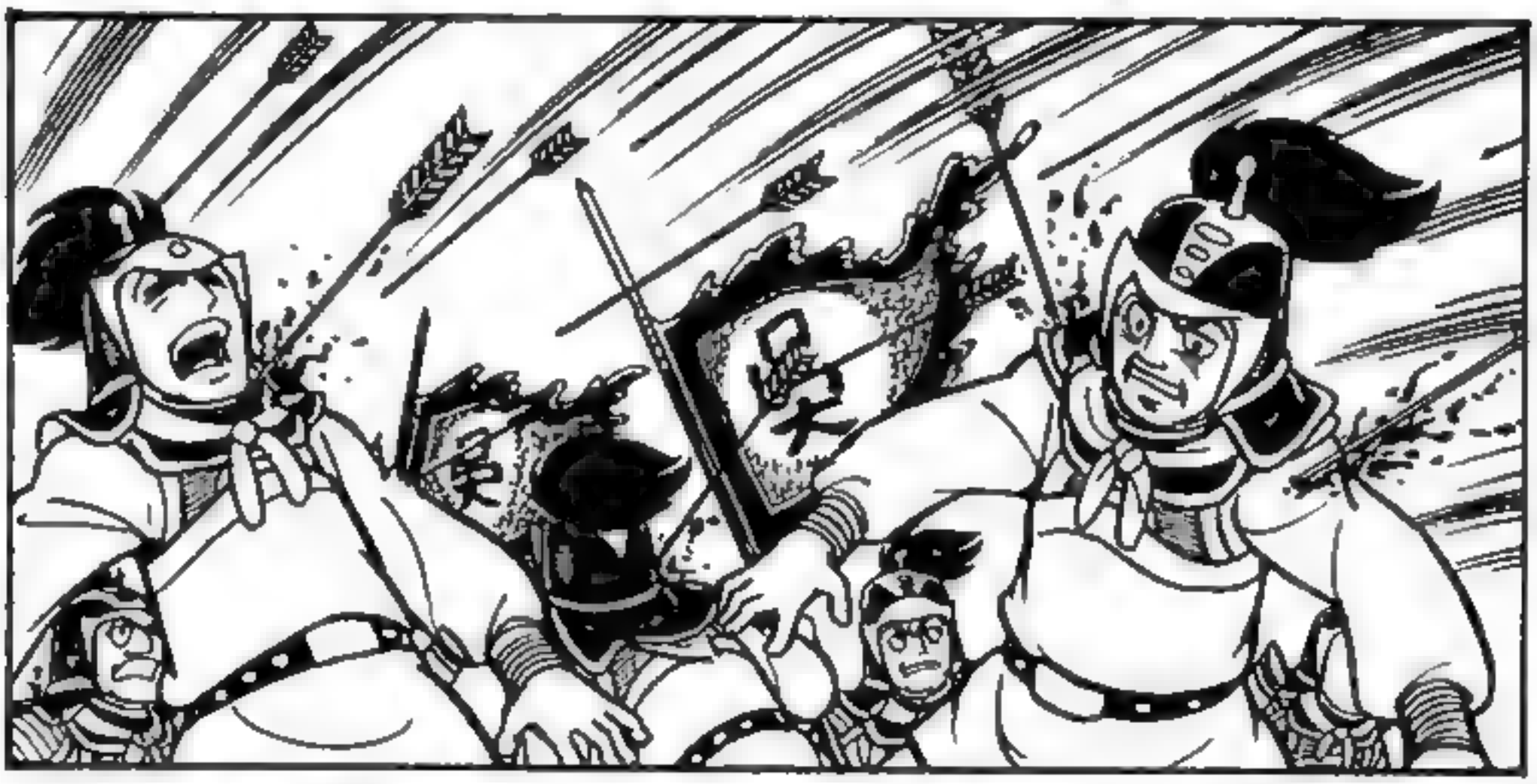
HM?

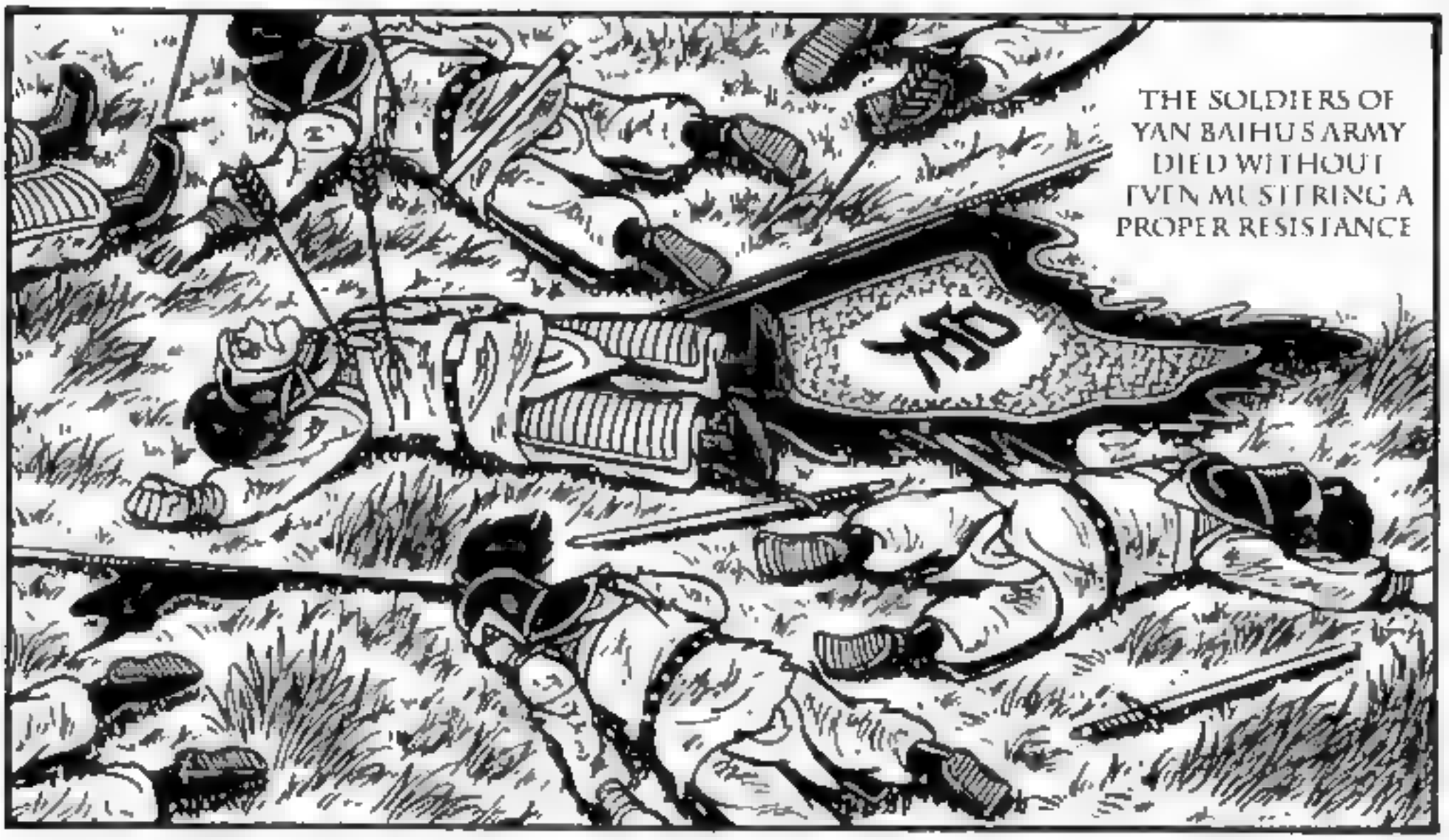
RUN! WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FLEE FOR NOW!

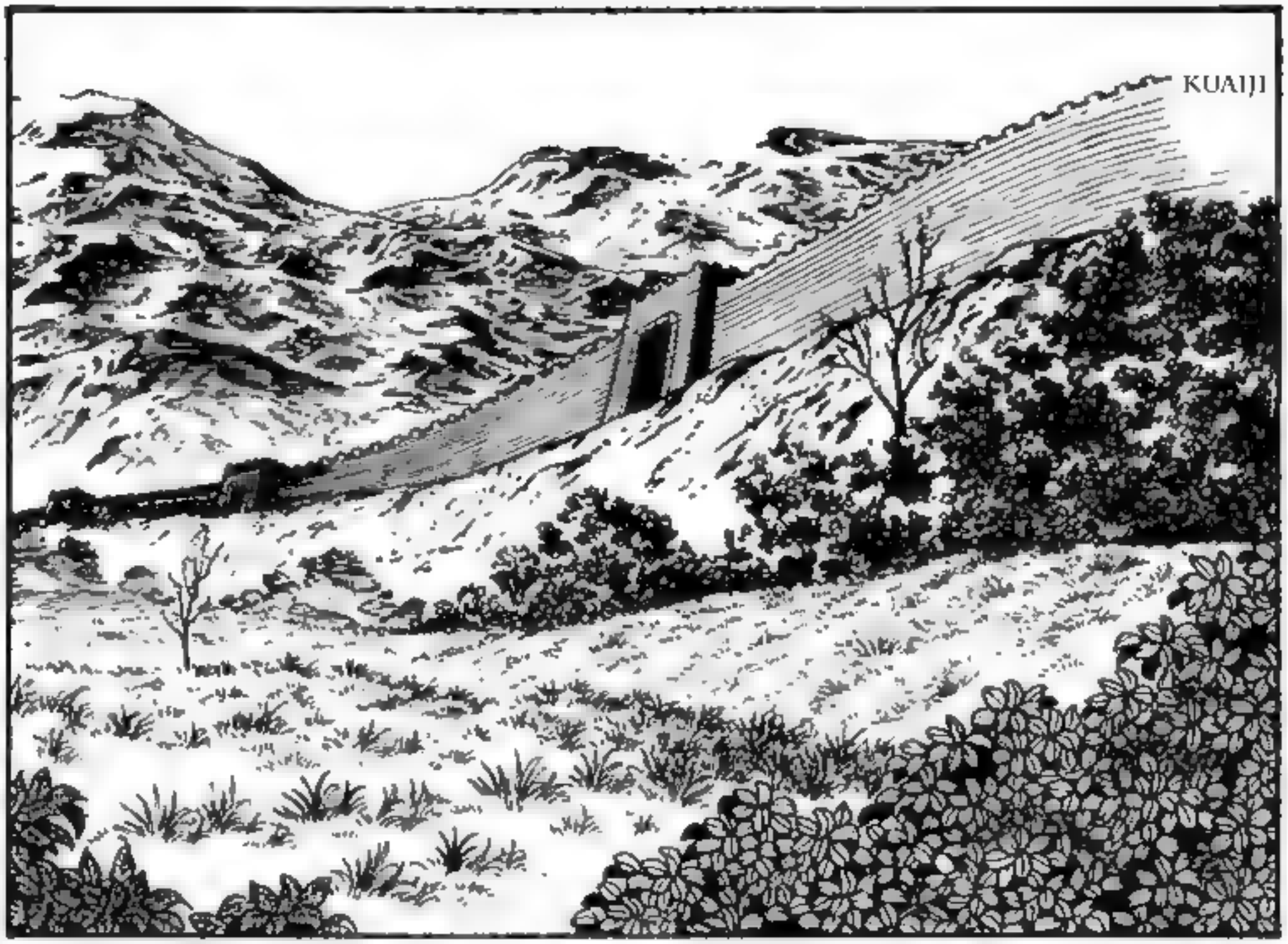
CURSES! HE ALREADY KNEW THAT WE'D TRY TO ESCAPE!

吳 吳 吳

THE FLAGS 吳 READ WU FOR WUJIN




THE SOLDIERS OF
YAN BAIHU'S ARMY
DIED WITHOUT
EVEN MUSTERING A
PROPER RESISTANCE


KUAIJI

HMM... SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED.

YES, GOVERNOR. AND HE SEEMS TO BE QUITE BATTERED.
WHAT? YAN BAIHU OF WUJUN HAS COME TO KUAIJI?

I MUST SHAME-FULLY ADMIT THAT I WAS UTTERLY DEFEATED BY THAT SUN CE...

AH! MY DEAR FRIEND BAIHU! WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?

HE WILL SOON COME HERE TO TAKE OVER KUAIJI FROM YOU AS WELL.

I AM INDEBTED TO YOU.

I SEE, THANK YOU FOR INFORMING ME. MAY WE WORK TOGETHER SO THAT YOU MAY CLAIM YOUR VENGEANCE.

I SHALL NEVER FORGET YOUR KINDNESS, WANG LANG.

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WHILE YOU'RE HERE.

THE REST OF YOU, IMMEDIATELY MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR SUN CE'S INEVITABLE ATTACK!

WHAT IS IT ZHONGXIANG?

PLEASE WAIT, MY LORD.

FULL NAME: YU FAN ZHONGXIAN

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I AM TALKING OF THE NEW WAVE OF OUR TIMES.

?

GOING AGAINST THE TIMES WILL ONLY LEAD TO THE END OF SIR.

WHAT!?

I ADVISE MY LORD TO ARREST AND HAND OVER YAN BAIHU TO SUN CE. BY DOING SO, WE CAN MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH SUN CE AND KEEP THIS LAND'S PEACE.

I WOULD BE THE LAUGHINGSTOCK OF THIS WORLD IF I WERE TO DO THAT!

YOU ASK YOUR LORD TO GROVEL AT SUN CE'S FEET!?

COMPARED TO HIM, YAN BAIHU IS NOTHING BUT A BRUTE WHO EXPLOITS HIS PEOPLE FOR HIS OWN SELFISH DESIRES. NOTHING GOOD CAN COME OF HELPING SUCH A DEPLORABLE MAN.

THAT IS NOT THE CASE, MY LORD. SUN CE IS A HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS MAN, WHO IS ALSO RESPECTED AND LOVED BY HIS PEOPLE.

SILENCE!

MOREOVER, YAN BAIHU IS A MAN OF THE PAST. EVEN IF SIR WERE TO LEND A HAND TO HIM, HE SHALL RUIN HIMSELF WITHIN TIME AS THE NEW WAVE BRINGS FORTH A NEW AGE.

YAN BAIHU AND I HAVE BEEN GOOD FRIENDS FOR A LONG TIME! I SHALL NOT STAND FOR SOME LITTLE BRAT TO NOT ONLY STEAL MY TERRITORY BUT ALSO COME BETWEEN OUR FRIENDSHIP!

I AM AFRAID THAT MY LORD HAS FALLEN BEHIND THE TIMES AS WELL AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SUCCEED IN THE COMING NEW AGE.

W-WHAT!? WHAT IMPU-DENCE...!!!

I THANK SIR FOR TAKING CARE OF ME UNTIL NOW.

GET OUT OF MY SIGHT AT ONCE!

MY LORD DOES NOT REALIZE HOW THE NEW WAVE WILL SWEEP THROUGH THIS WORLD AND CHANGE EVERYTHING AS WE KNOW IT...

THERE. NOW GO FIND YOUR FREEDOM SOMEWHERE AMONG THIS VAST LAND!

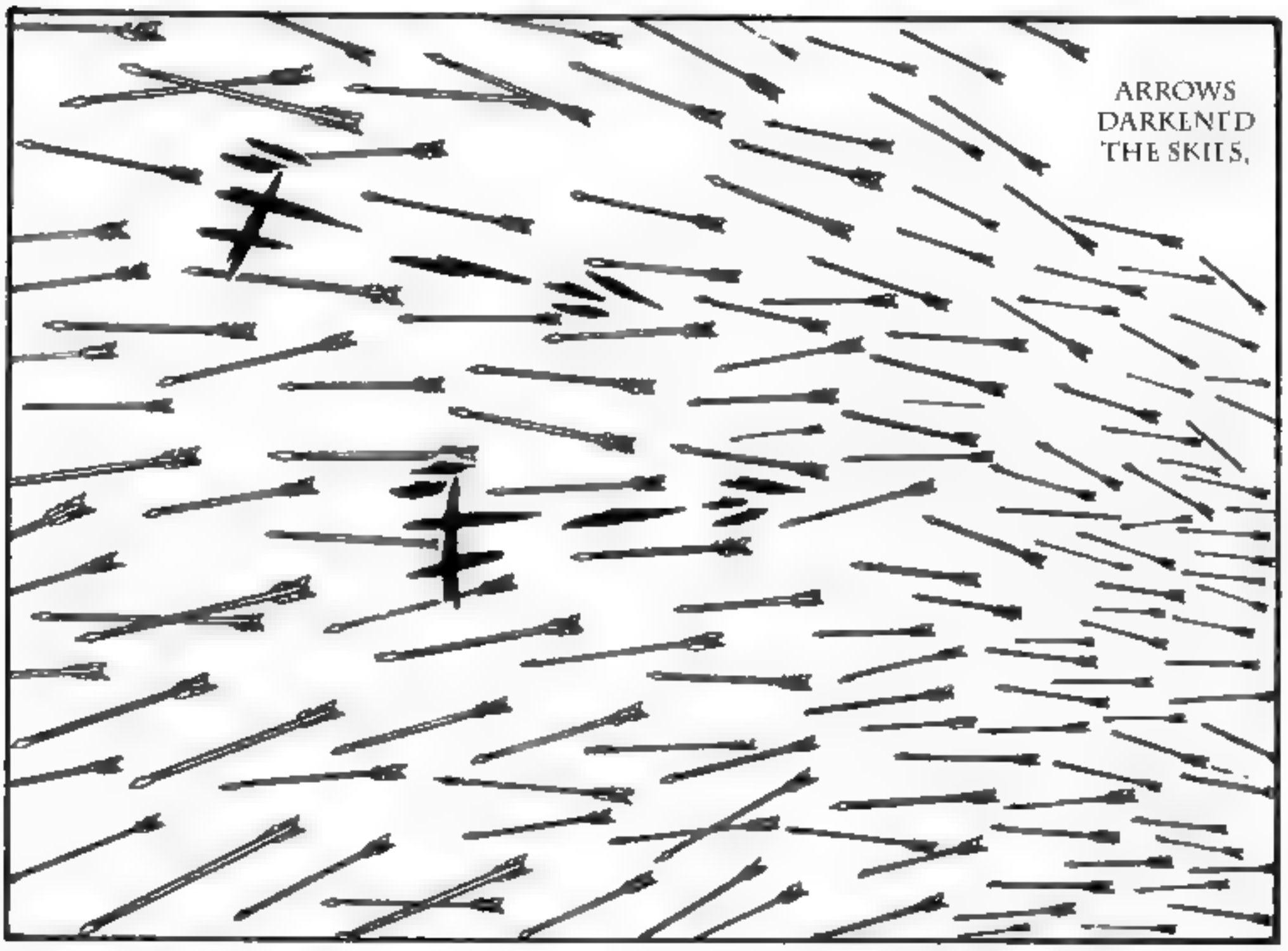
I'M SURE EVEN YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE KEPT BY A THOUGHTLESS MASTER...

ZHONGXIANG COULD ONLY RELATE TOO WELL WITH THE LITTLE BIRD DISAPPEARING INTO THE BLUE SKY, IN SEARCH FOR A NEW LIFE

MEANWHILE, SUN CE'S ARMY MARCHED ONWARDS TO KUAIJI, THEIR FOOTSTEPS SOUNDING OUT THE COMING NEW WAVE

PACIFICATION OF JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG

BUT WANG
LANG PROVED
TO BE A
WORTHY
OPPONENT


ARROWS
DARKENED
THE SKIES,

AND
CASUALTIES
WERE HIGH
FOR BOTH
SIDES.

BEHOLD, MEN! SEE WHAT THAT YOUNGSTER SUN CE CAN DO! ALL HE CAN DO IS COWER INSIDE HIS TENT!

IT SHAN'T BE LONG BEFORE THEIR FOOD SUPPLIES RUN OUT!

MOREOVER, HIS ARMY HAS BEEN FIGHTING RELENT-LESSLY FOR MANY WEEKS ALREADY!

SO LET US AWAIT OUR ENEMIES' DOWN-FALL SAFELY WITHIN OUR CASTLE!

ONCE THAT HAPPENS, WE WILL EASILY BE ABLE TO DEFEAT THEM IN ONE FELL SWOOP!

YES, IT IS EXACTLY AS YOU SAY, WANG LANG.

SEE, MY SOLDIERS' MORALE IS AS HIGH AS EVER! THERE IS NO NEED TO WORRY, BAIHU.

帥
UNFORTUNATELY NO, MY LORD.
DO THE ENEMIES STILL SHOW NO SIGNS OF COMING OUT FROM KUAIJI?
WANG LANG SEEMS DETERMINED TO PLAY HIS CARDS DEFENSIVELY UNTIL THE VERY END.

ONLY ENOUGH TO LAST HALF A MONTH, SIR...

HOW MUCH FOOD DOES OUR ARMY STILL HAVE LEFT?

HMM, HOW TROUBLING...

WE CANNOT DRAG THIS BATTLE OUT ANY LONGER.

MNN...

WANG LANG IS MOST LIKELY PLANNING TO WAIT UNTIL WE RUN OUT OF FOOD BEFORE LAUNCHING AN OFFENSIVE.

THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO LURE WANG LANG OUT FROM HIS CASTLE...

AH, MY UNCLE SUN JING! PLEASE, LEND ME YOUR WISDOM.

I HAVE AN IDEA, SUN CE.

WHAT?

WERE YOU AWARE THAT THE SUPPLIES FOR KUAIJI ARE NOT STORED WITHIN?

IF WE ATTTACK CHADU, I'M SURE WANG LANG WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP STILL ANY LONGER.

IS THAT TRUE...!?

IT SEEMS THAT A CASTLE NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE CALLED CHADU, HOLDS MOST OF THE FOOD SUPPLIES FOR KUAIJI, IN ADDITION TO STORING MANY VALUABLE TREASURES.

I SEE... THANK YOU, UNCLE THAT IS A MOST EXCELLENT PLAN.

YES.

HEAR THAT MEN? OUR NEXT COURSE OF ACTION HAS BEEN DECIDED.

AHAHA! EXACTLY AS YOU SAY, WANG LANG. I'M SURE THAT BRAT IS AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT TO DO NEXT.

HAHAHA! BY MERELY STRENGTHENING OUR DEFENSES, EVEN THAT ARROGANT HOT-SHOT CAN'T DO ANYTHING!

WHAT IS IT?

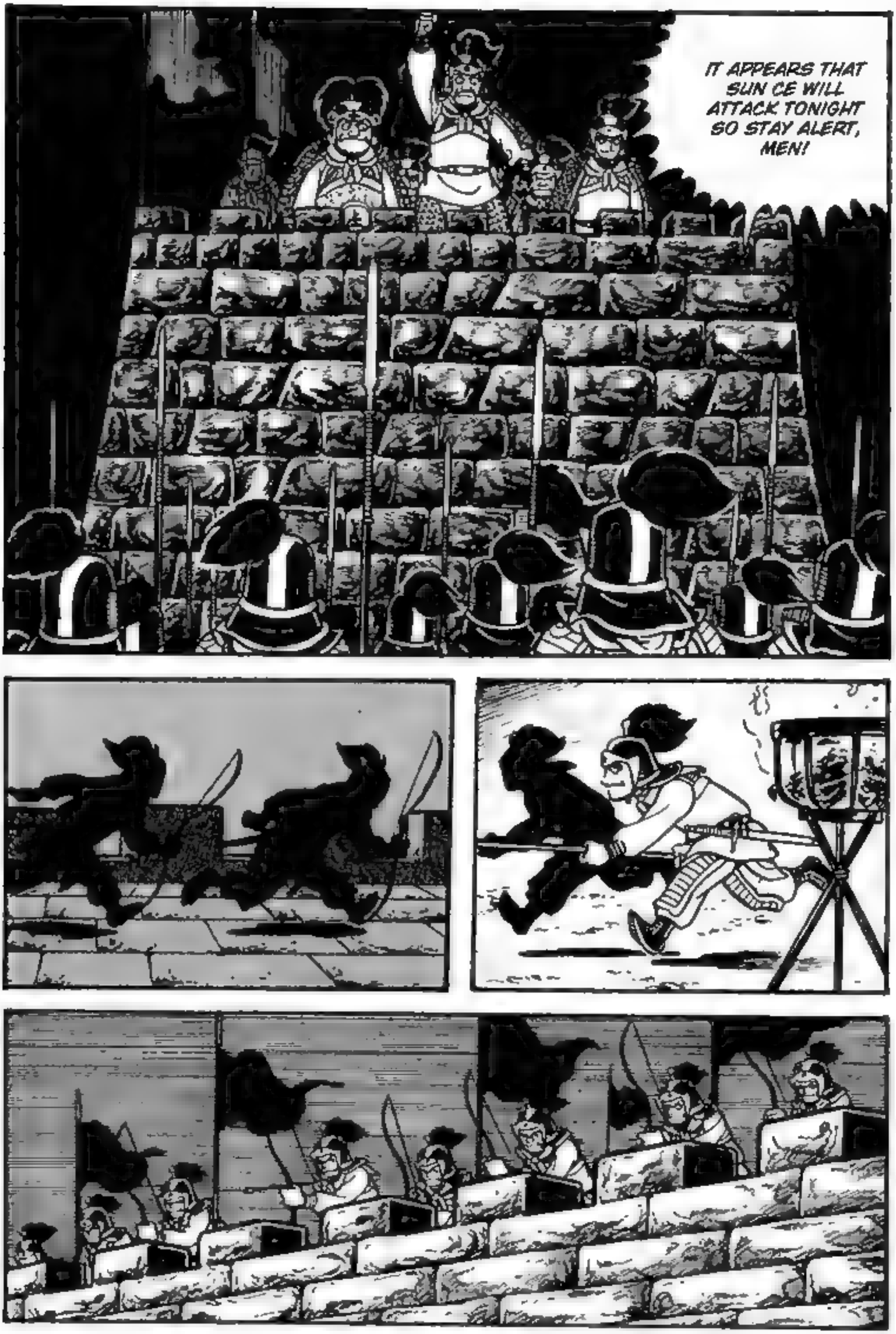
MY LORD!

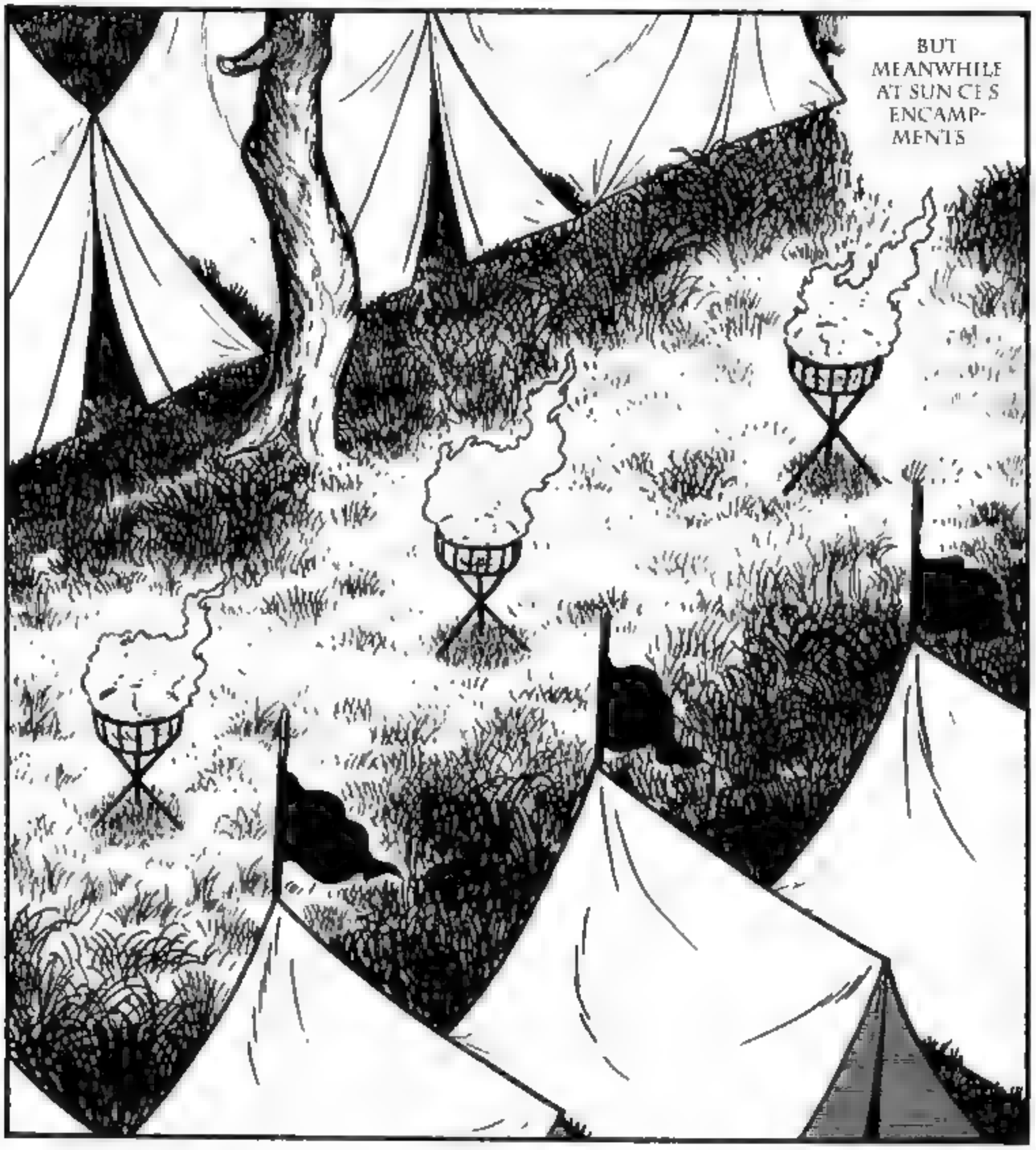
WHAT!
SUN CE'S FORCES SEEM TO BE PLANNING SOMETHING, SIR!

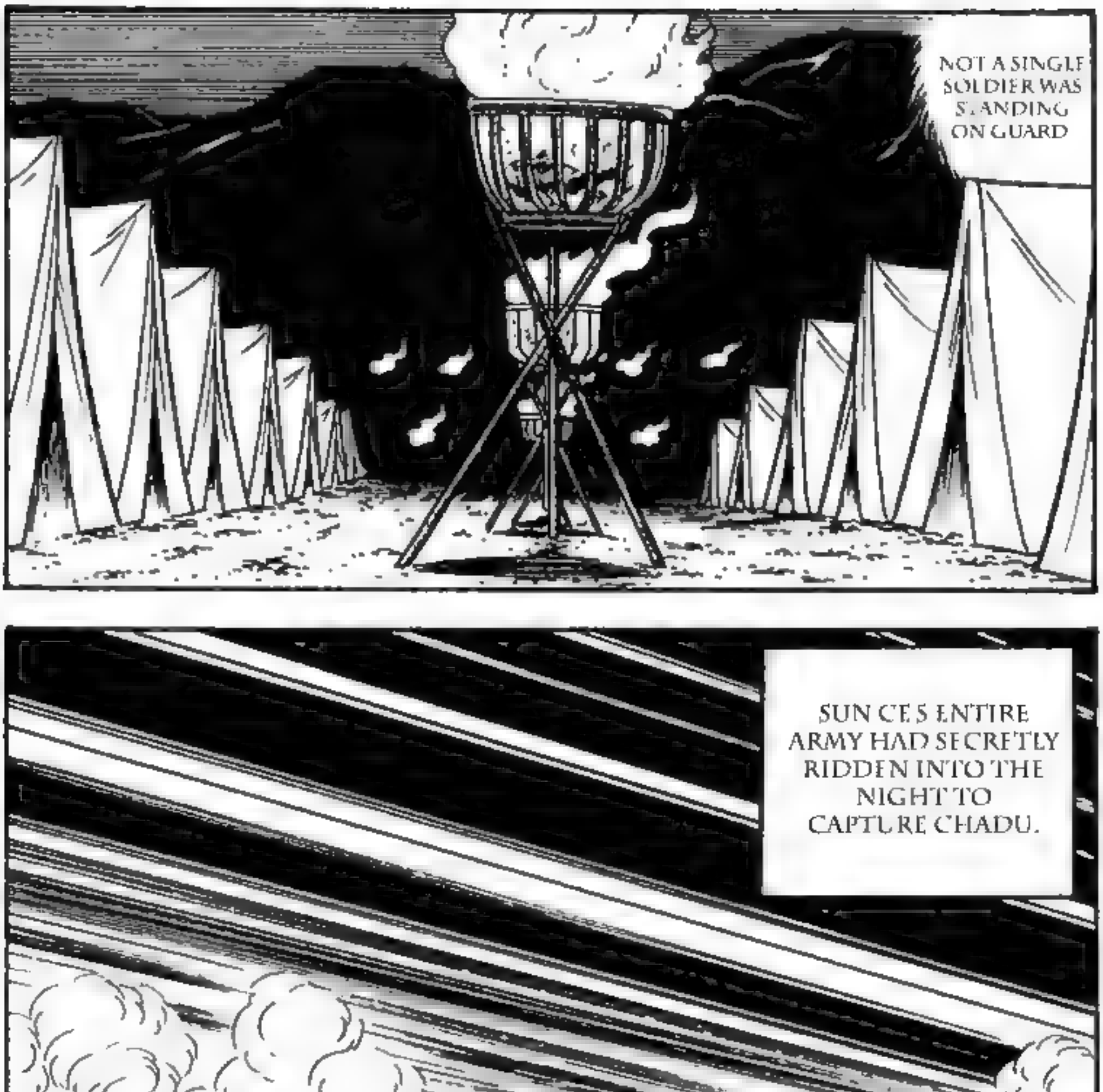
AHH!

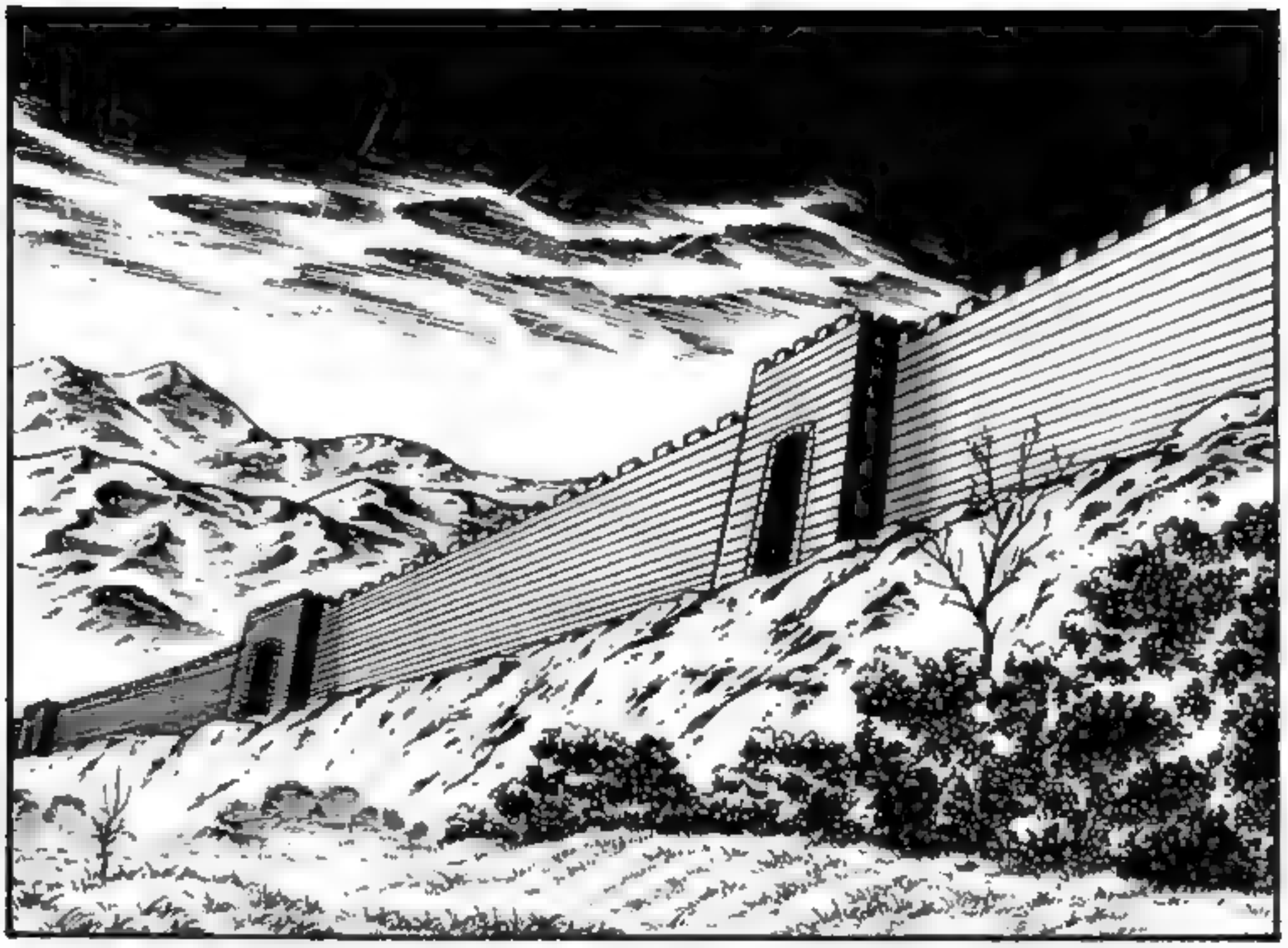
I SEE, SO THAT BRAT MUST FINALLY BE TIRED OF JUST WAITING OUTSIDE...!

THAT'S QUITE A LOT OF TORCHES ...


IT APPEARS THAT SUN CE WILL ATTACK TONIGHT SO STAY ALERT, MEN!


BUT MEANWHILE AT SUNCES ENCAMP-MENTS


NOT A SINGLE SOLDIER WAS STANDING ON GUARD
SUN CE'S ENTIRE ARMY HAD SECRETLY RIDDEN INTO THE NIGHT TO CAPTURE CHADU.



WEREN'T THEY SUPPOSED TO ATTACK LAST NIGHT?

YAWN!

HMM?

WELL...
CAPTAIN, WHY DIDN'T THE ENEMIES ATTACK LAST NIGHT?

AHH!

YES, CAPTAIN. THEIR ENCAMP-MENTS SEEM DESERTED.

THAT'S ODD, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A SINGLE ENEMY LEFT...

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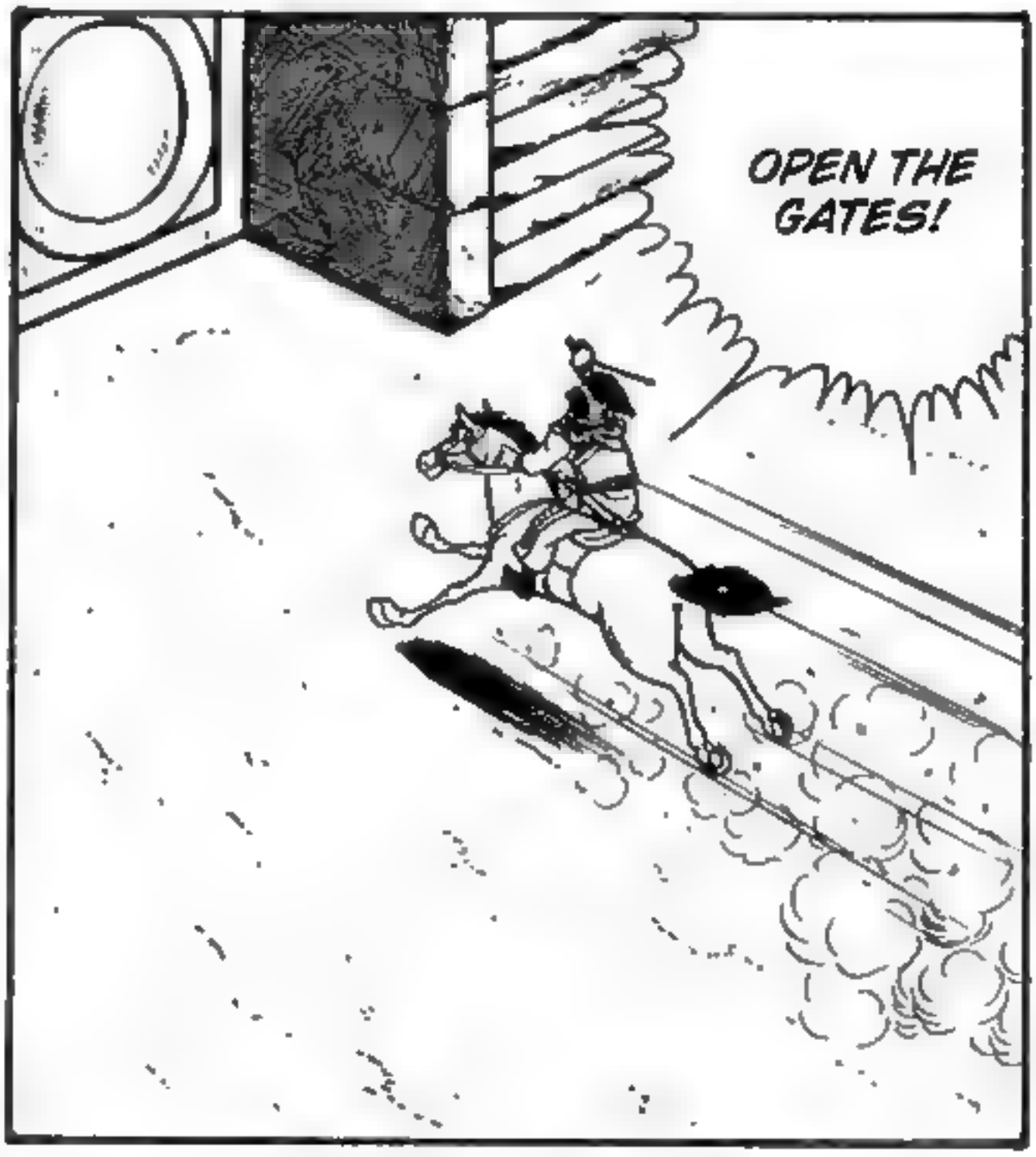
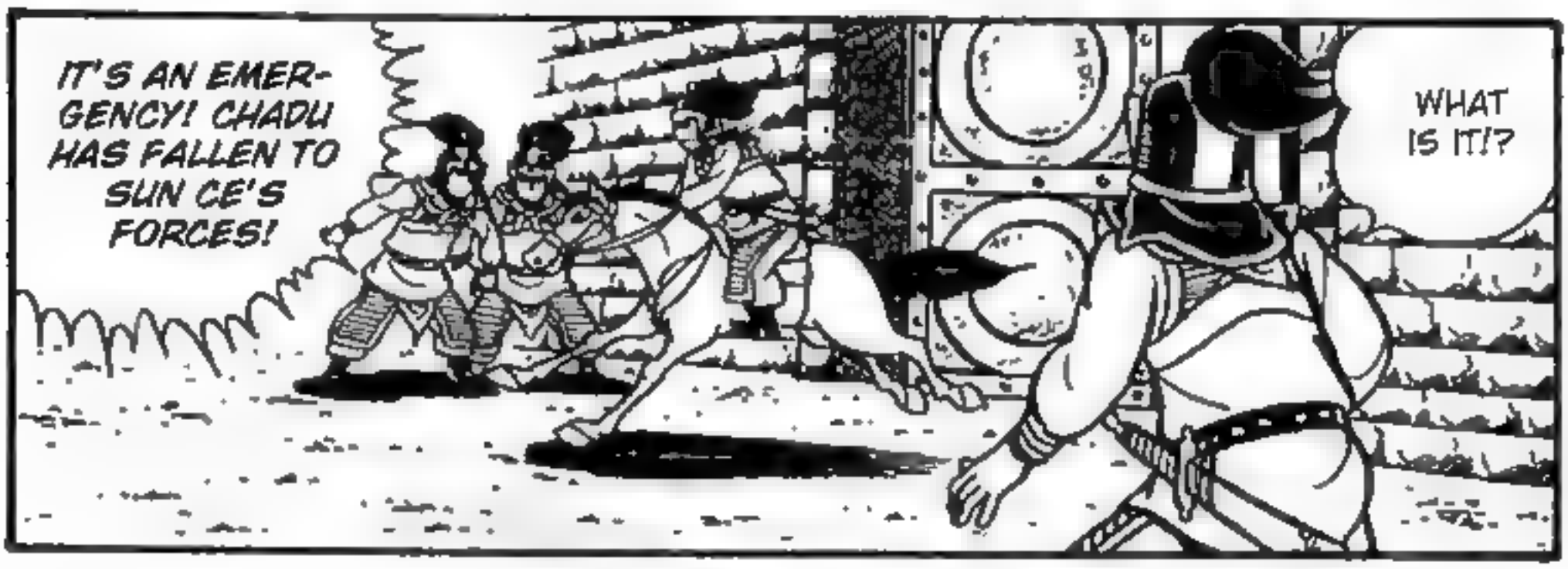

OPEN THE GATES!


IT'S AN EMER-GENCY! CHADU HAS FALLEN TO SUN CE'S FORCES!
WHAT IS IT!?

AGHH!

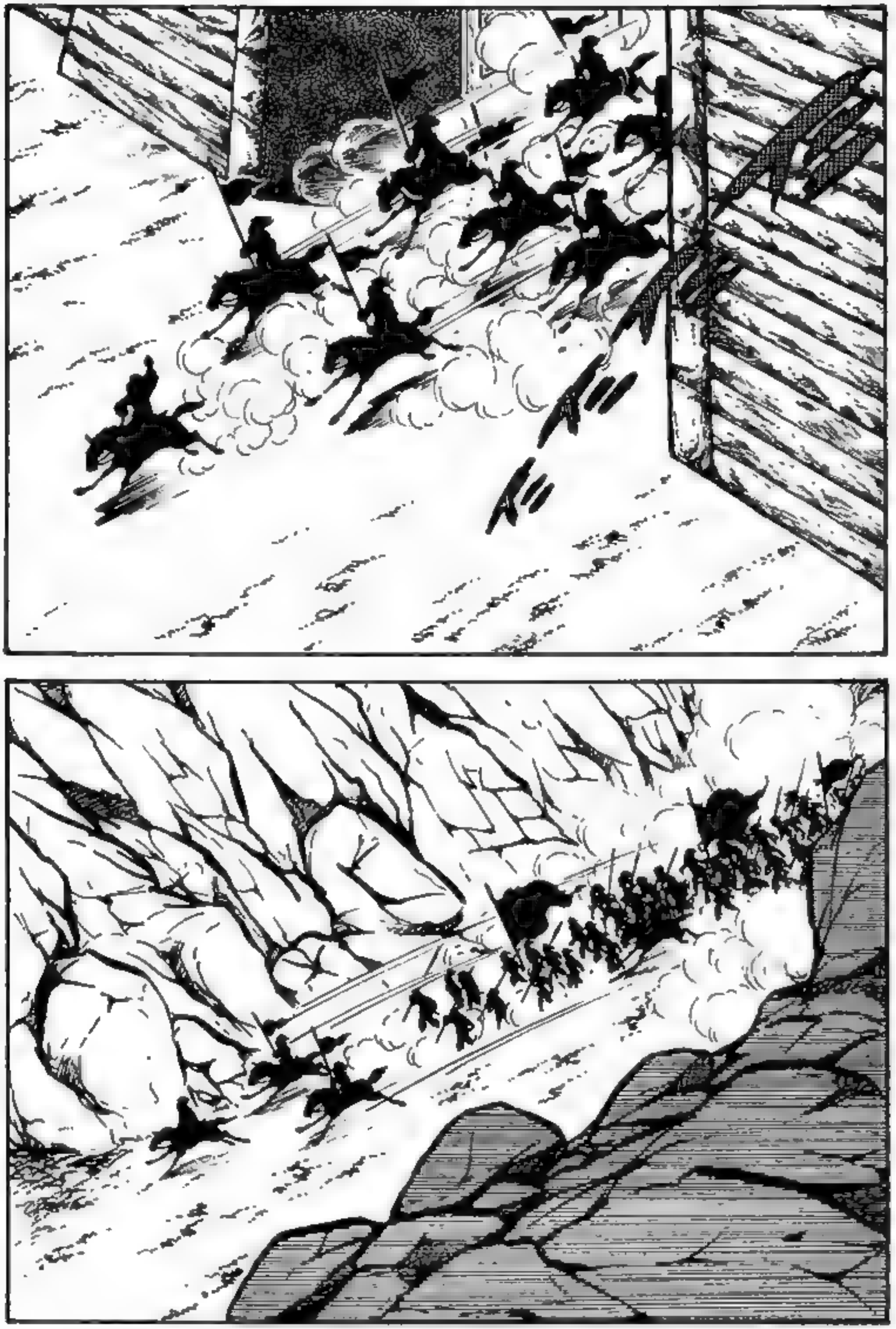
DAMN, WE'VE BEEN HAD!

AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BE THE ONES TO STARVE FIRST!

YES, SIR!

WHAT!? SUN CE HAS CAPTURED CHADU!?

MOBILIZE THE TROOPS! WE MUST GO AND RECAPTURE CHADU!



IT'S THE SIGNAL! THE ENEMY FORCES MUST HAVE COME OUT FROM KUAIJI AND BE HEADING THIS WAY!

ALRIGHT, MEN! WE SHALL FINALLY HAVE OUR BATTLE!

NOW!

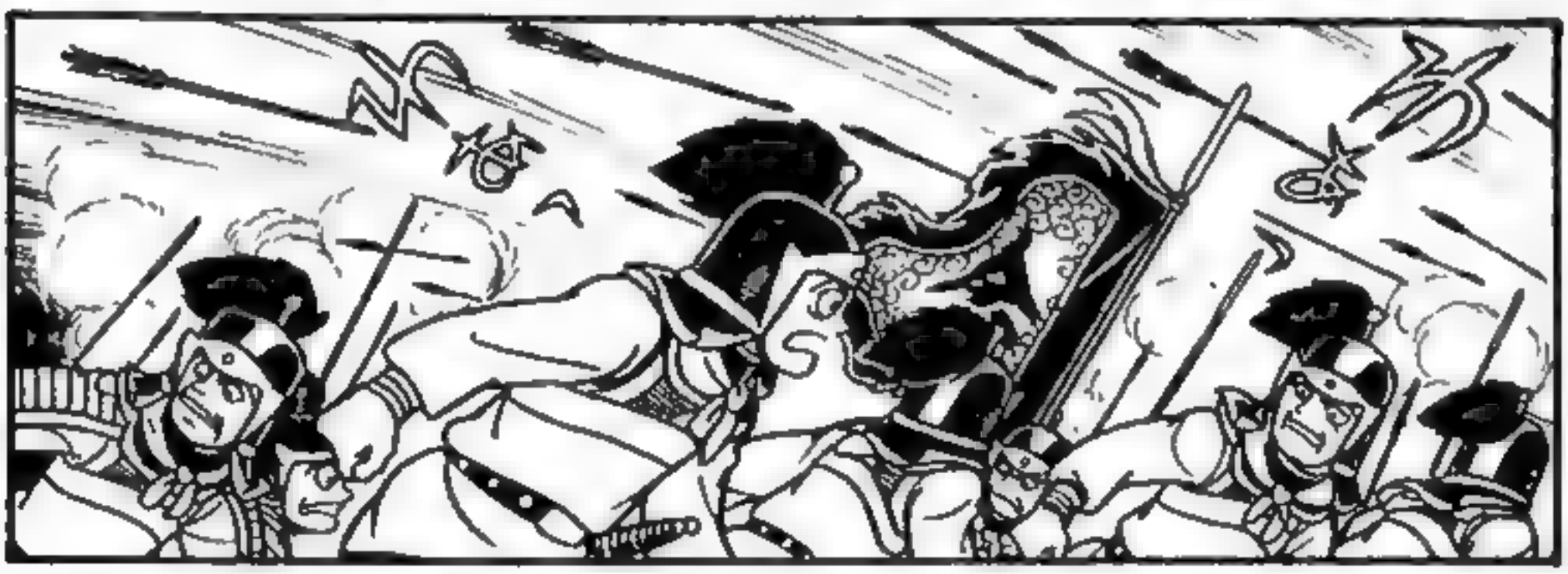
AHH!

AGHHH!

UGH!

RETREAT!
RETREAT!

CURSES!
IT'S AN
ENEMY
AMBUSH!

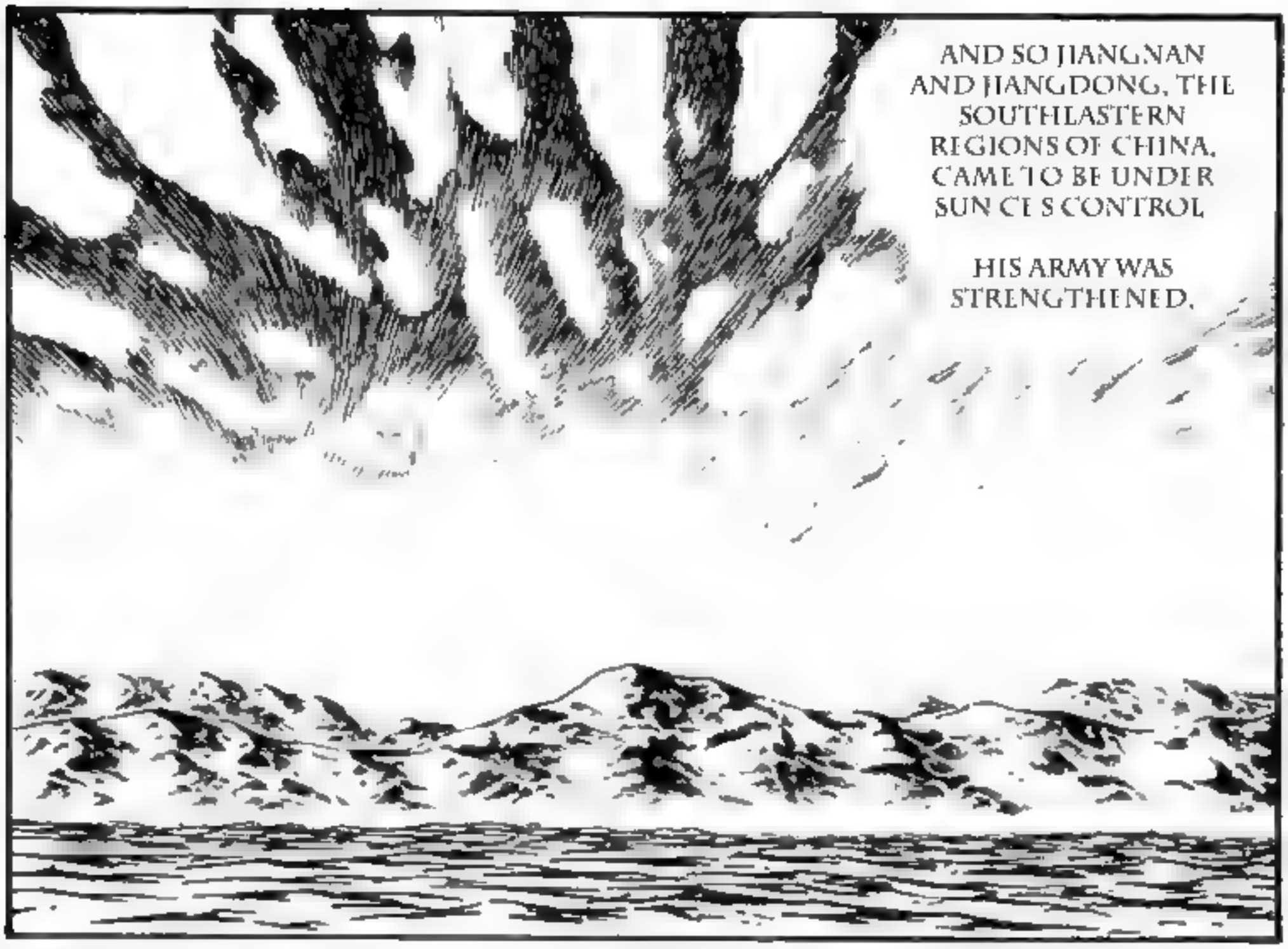


AGHHH!

THEY'VE BLOCKED OUR EXIT!

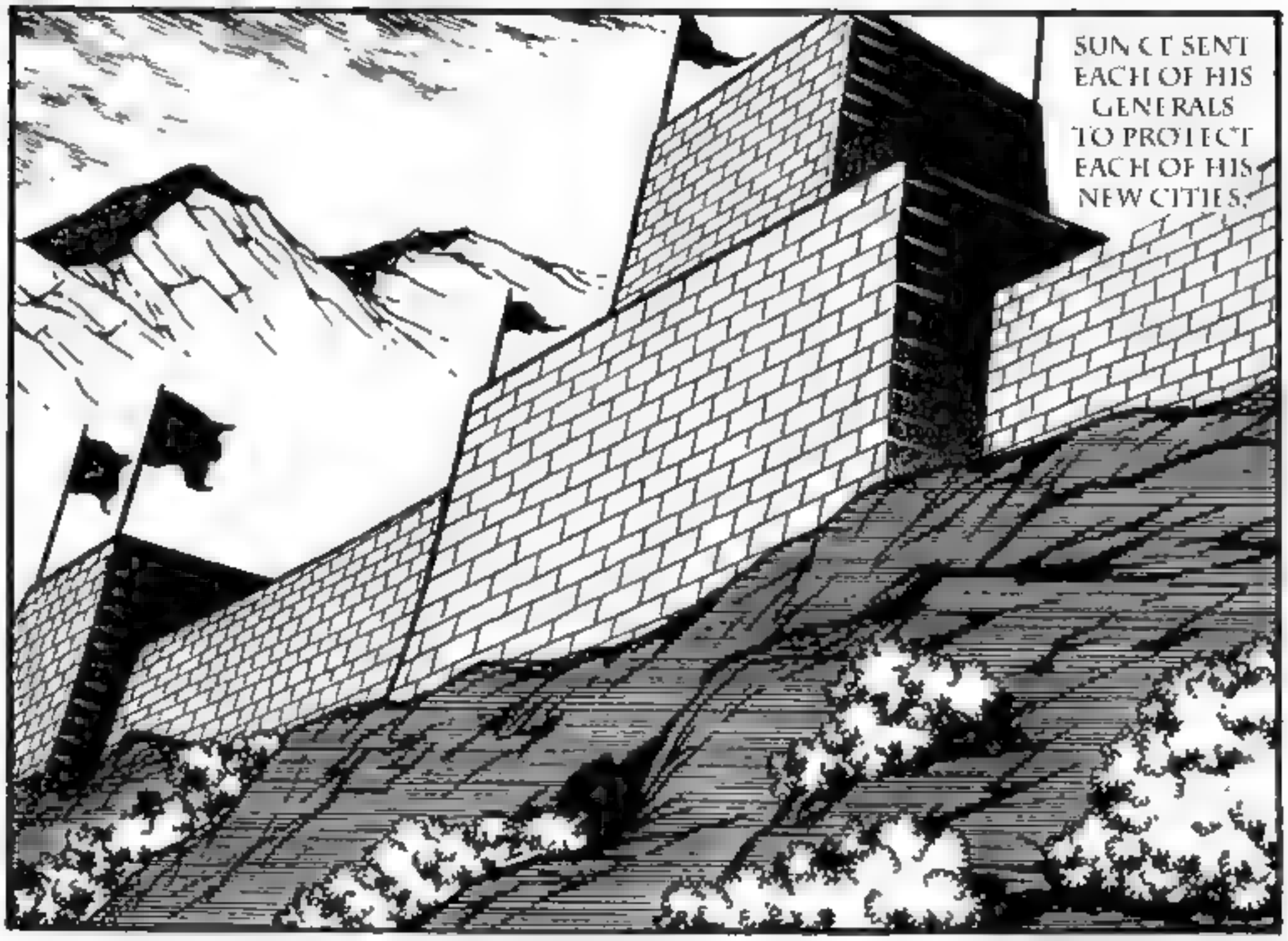
NOW! ALL UNITS, CHARGE!

KUAIJI'S SOLDIERS WERE QUICKLY ANNHILATED AND THEIR MOUNTAIN OF CORPSES FILLED THE PASS


AND SO JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG, THE SOUTHEASTERN REGIONS OF CHINA, CAME TO BE UNDER SUN CE'S CONTROL.
HIS ARMY WAS STRENGTHENED.

THE LANDS FLOURISHED,

AND THE CITIES THRIVED


SUN CE SENT
EACH OF HIS
GENERALS
TO PROTECT
EACH OF HIS
NEW CITIES.

AND EMPLOYED
MANY
TALENTED
INDIVIDUALS

HE HAD AT LAST
SOLIDIFIED HIS
OWN BASE OF
POWER AS THE
LITTLE
CONQUEROR

LU BU'S WIT

MEANWHILE, YUAN SHU WHO HAD TAKEN POSSESSION OF THE IMPERIAL SEAL AFTER LENDING 5000 SOLDIERS TO SUN CE
HAD BEEN EXPANDING HIS SPHERE OF INFLUENCE OUTWARDS FROM HUAINAN COMMANDERY
GENTLEMEN, I HAVE CALLED YOU ALL HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS AN IMPORTANT MATTER.

I RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER FROM SUN CE. HE SAYS THAT HE WILL RETURN 10 TIMES THE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS AND HORSES HE ORIGINALLY BORROWED FROM ME, SO HE ASKS THAT I RETURN THE IMPERIAL SEAL.

THERE IS NO NEED FOR MY LORD TO TAKE SUN CE'S WORDS SERIOUSLY.

AND AFTER MANY MONTHS, HE CONTACTS SIR NOT TO PAY HIS GRATITUDE BUT TO DEMAND THE IMPERIAL SEAL!?

HE IS SURELY A MAN WHO KNOWS NOT OF HOW TO BE THANKFUL!

THAT'S RIGHT! MY LORD HAS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED THAT HOMELESS BRAT A HOME AND EVEN LENT HIM AN ARMY! IF IT WEREN'T FOR MY LORD'S KINDNESS, HE WOULD NOT BE STANDING WHERE HE IS TODAY!

PLEASE CALM YOURSELVES DOWN.

I AM NOT OPPOSED TO THE IDEA OF ATTACKING SUN CE.

HEAR, HEAR!

FORGET ABOUT RETURNING THE SEAL, I SAY WE SEND AN ARMY TO CRUSH THAT UNGRATEFUL BRAT!

MOREOVER, SUN CE HAS GAINED MANY TALENTED RECRUITS AND HIS ARMY IS LARGER THAN EVER AFTER CONQUERING JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG. WE MUSTN'T FIGHT HIM HEAD-ON NOW FOR THE TIME BEING.

BUT TO DO SO, WE MUST CROSS THE YANGTZE RIVER AND THAT IS NO EASY TASK BY ITSELF.

DANGERS TO THE NORTH?

WE MUST PRIORITIZE THE MATTER OF THE DANGERS TO THE NORTH. ONLY AFTER THOSE DANGERS ARE ELIMINATED MAY WE AFFORD TO TURN OUR ATTENTION SOUTH TOWARDS SUN CE.

THINK OF HOW HE ATTACKED YANZHOU AS SOON AS CAO CAO LEFT IT. NOT ONLY THAT, HE LATER STOLE XUZHOU FROM LIU BEI AS WELL!

LU BU IS ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS.

I AM TALKING OF XUZHOU'S LU BU AND XIAOPEI'S LIU BEI.

YES, EXACTLY. THAT IS WHY I SUGGEST WE TAKE CARE OF THE NORTH BEFORE THE SOUTH.

I SEE. CERTAINLY AS YOU SAY, LU BU MIGHT DARE TO ATTACK HUAINAN AT ANY MOMENT.

HOW CAN WE LEAVE HUAINAN EMPTY WHEN A WOLF IS LYING IN WAIT TO THE NORTH!?

HMM, YES. THAT IS MOST WISE.

JUST HOW CAN I BRING DOWN THOSE TWO EASILY...?

LIU BEI OF XIAOPEI POSES NO THREAT TO ME SINCE HE HAS LOST MOST OF HIS ARMY. HOWEVER, I AM AFRAID THAT LU BU MIGHT COME TO HIS AID IF I DECIDE TO ATTACK XIAOPEI.

YES, GO RIGHT AHEAD.

I HAVE A PLAN TO PROPOSE FOR THAT, MY LORD.

YES, AND...?

PREVIOUSLY, MY LORD PROMISED LU BU 5000 CARTS OF GRAIN, 500 HORSES, 10,000 TAELS OF GOLD AND SILVER, AND 1000 ROLLS OF SILK IF HE WERE TO ATTACK LIU BEI.

BY DOING SO, LU BU WILL LOOK THE OTHER WAY WHEN MY LORD ATTACKS XUANDE.

I BELIEVE NOW WOULD BE THE BEST TIME TO DO GOOD ON THAT PROMISE.

YES, MY LORD.

AND AFTER TAKING CARE OF LIU BEI, I ATTACK LU BU...?

HMM...

YES, MY LORD.

IF GIVING LU BU THAT MUCH WILL MEAN THAT XIAOPEI AND XUZHOU WILL BECOME MINE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THEN SO BE IT.

AND SO THE GOODS PROMISED TO LU BU EARLIER WERE AT LAST DELIVERED TO HIM.

XUZHOU

THIS IS MOST LIKELY A PLOY BY YUAN SHU TO CONVINCE MY LORD TO OVERLOOK HIS CONQUEST OF XIAOPEI IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

WHY DO YOU THINK YUAN SHU FINALLY DECIDED TO KEEP HIS PROMISE?

BUT IF XIAOPEI WERE TO FALL TO YUAN SHU'S HANDS,

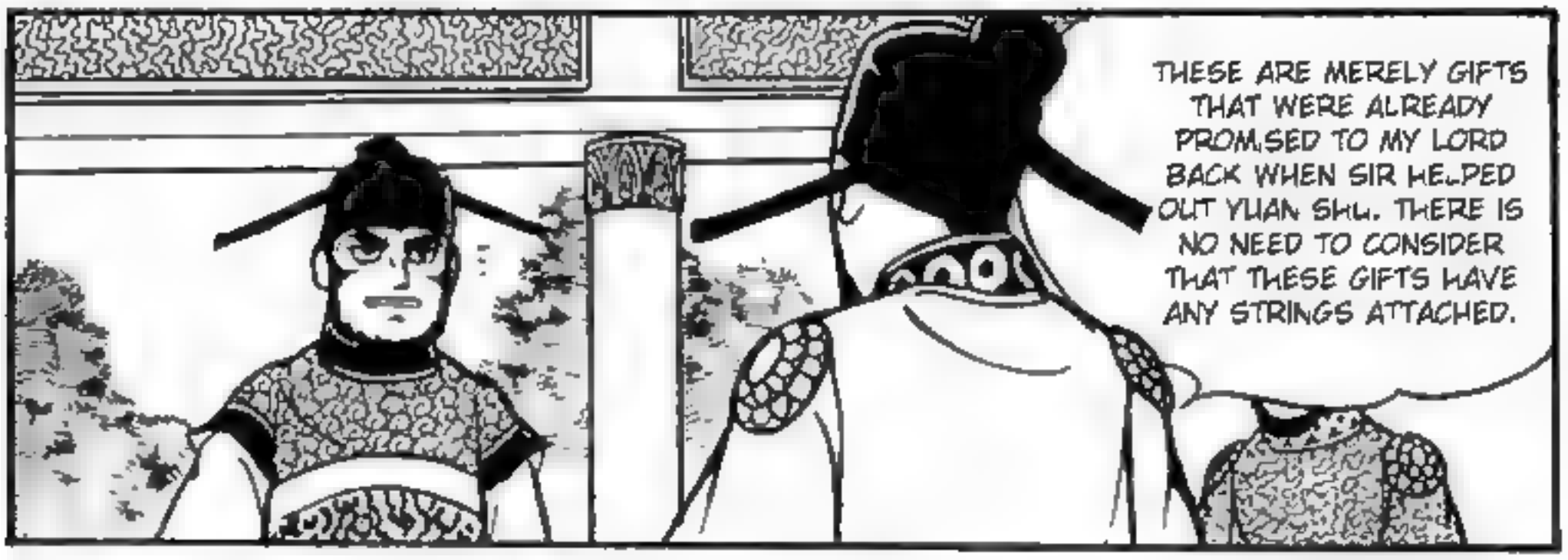
XUANDE IS NOT A MAN WHO WOULD BETRAY OTHERS. IF HE CONTINUES TO RULE OVER XIAOPEI, HE WILL EVEN OFFER TO HELP MY LORD DEFEND XUZHOU IF AN ENEMY WERE TO ATTACK.

MY LORD MUST THINK WISELY OF THE NEXT COURSE OF ACTION TO TAKE.

THEN IT SHALL ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL HE ATTACKS XUZHOU.

THEN WHAT SHALL I DO WITH ALL OF THESE... *BRIBES...?*

HMM, I SEE... SO THAT'S WHAT YUAN SHU IS AIMING FOR...

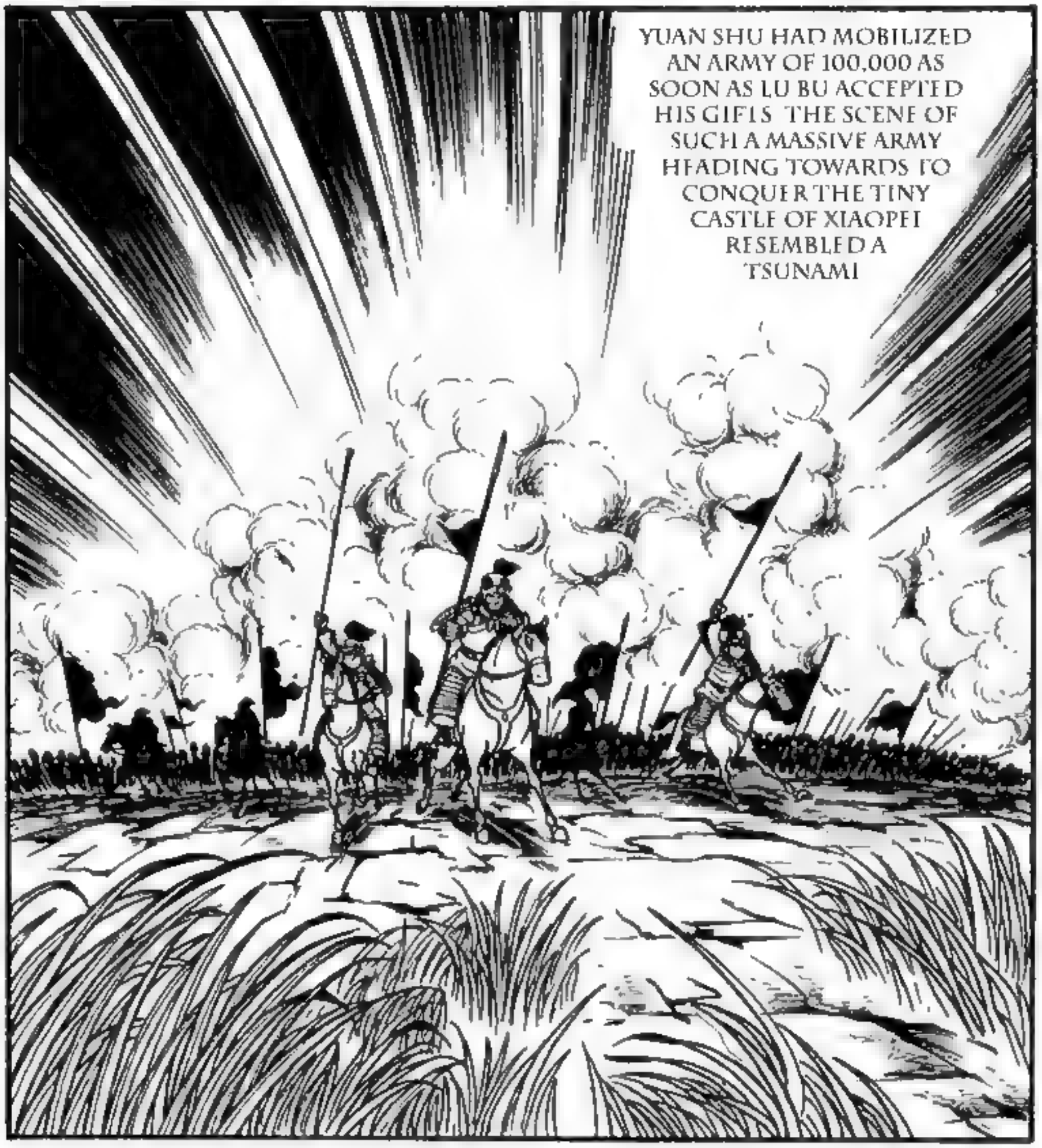

THESE ARE MERELY GIFTS THAT WERE ALREADY PROMISED TO MY LORD BACK WHEN SIR HELPED OUT YUAN SHU. THERE IS NO NEED TO CONSIDER THAT THESE GIFTS HAVE ANY STRINGS ATTACHED.

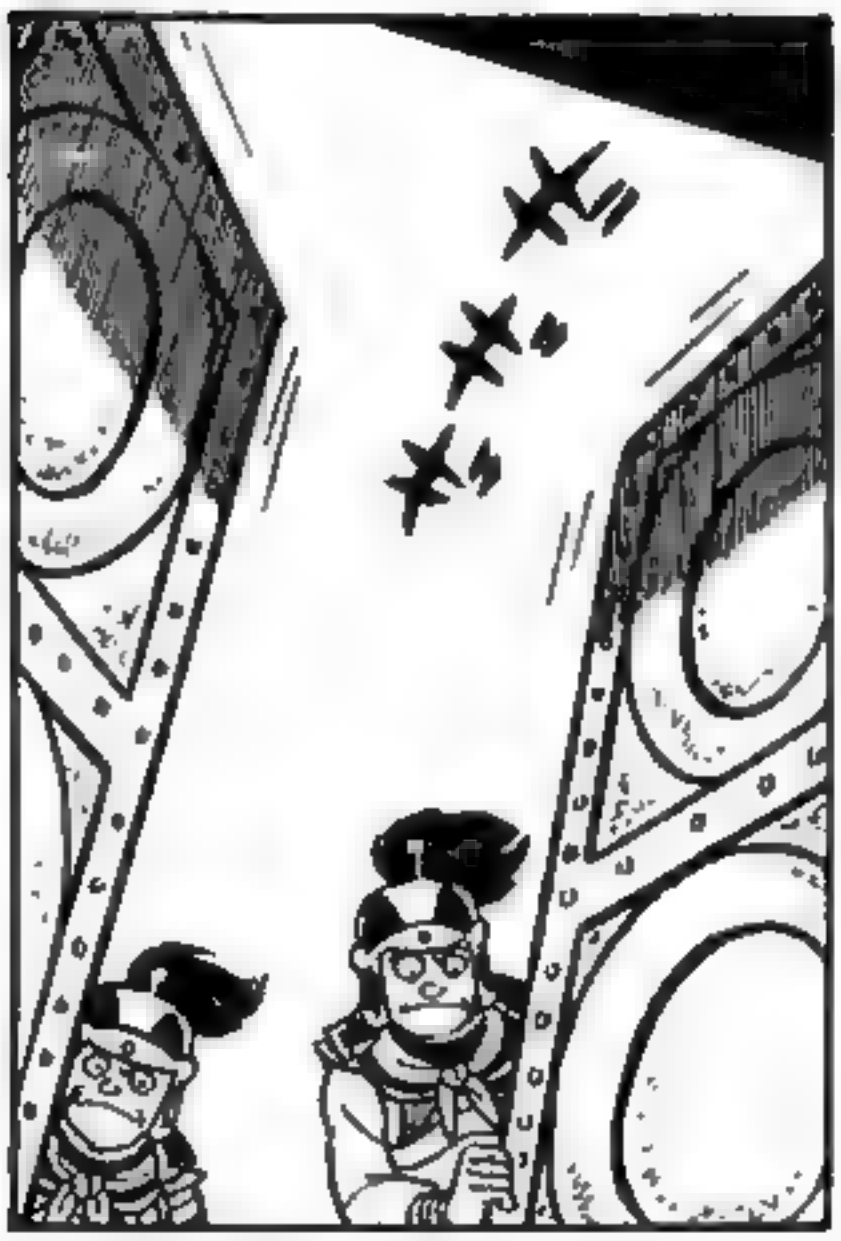
HAHAHA!
AHAHAHA! OF COURSE, OF COURSE! IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT YUAN SHU KEEPS A PROMISE HE MADE.

YES, MY LORD. THEIR FORCES NUMBER AT 100,000 SOLDIERS.

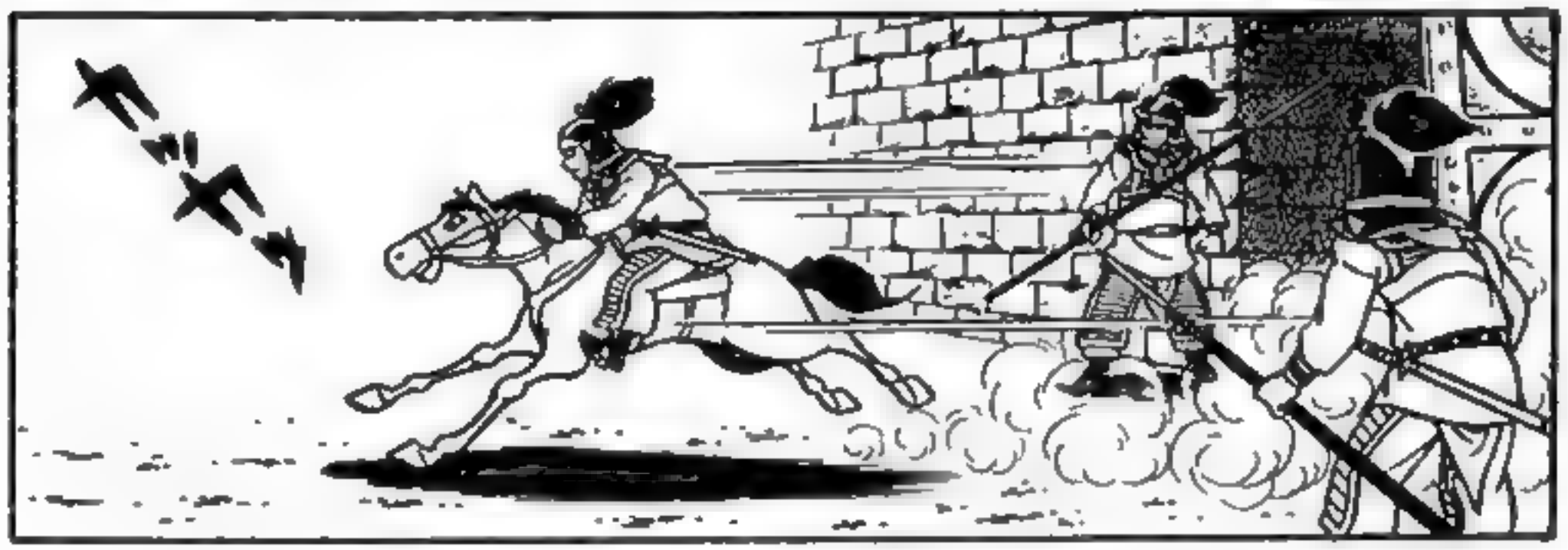
WHAT!? YUAN SHU'S FORCES ARE COMING TO ATTACK XIAOPEI!?

100,000!?


YUAN SHU HAD MOBILIZED AN ARMY OF 100,000 AS SOON AS LU BU ACCEPTED HIS GIFTS. THE SCENE OF SUCH A MASSIVE ARMY HEADING TOWARDS TO CONQUER THE TINY CASTLE OF XIAOPEI RESEMBLED A TSUNAMI



OPEN THE GATES! I AM A MESSENGER FROM XIAOPEI!



YES, SIR. MY LORD, LIU BEI, URGENTLY PLEADS FOR SIR TO LEND ASSISTANCE FOR HE CURRENTLY ONLY HAS AN ARMY OF 5000 WITHIN XIAOPEI CASTLE.

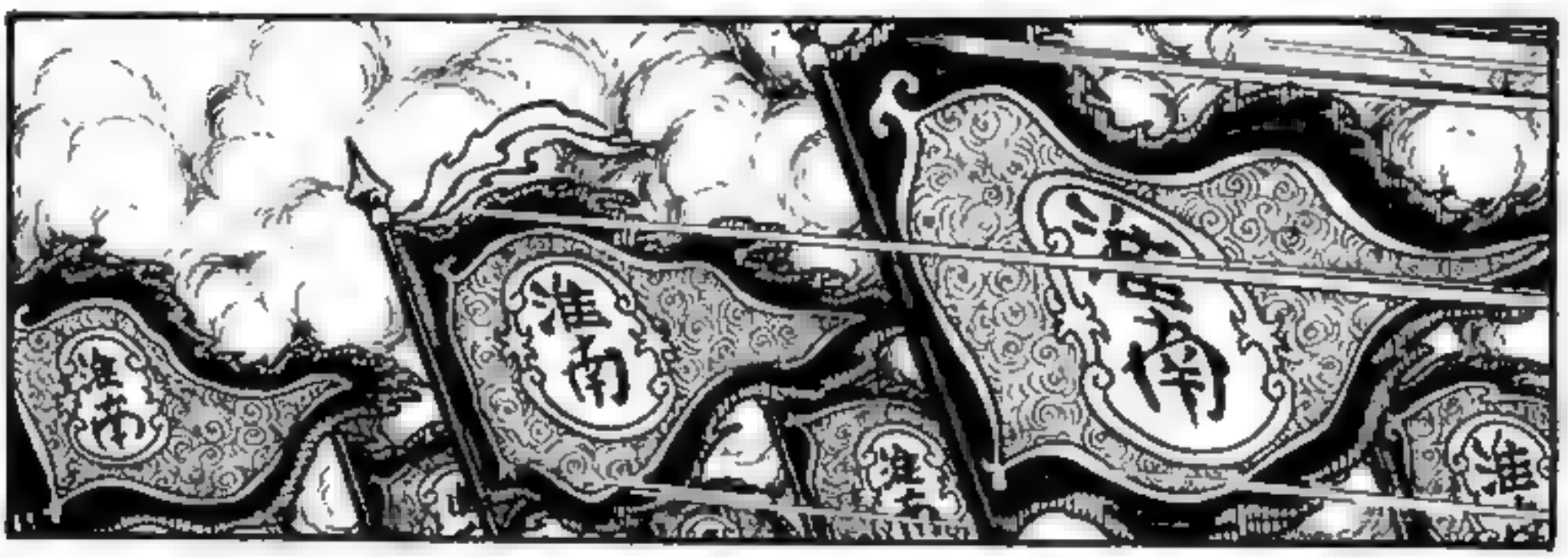
YUAN SHU HAS SENT OUT AN ARMY OF 100,000 JUST FOR XIAOPEI!?

YES. HE MUST HAVE BEEN EAGERLY WAITING FOR MY LORD'S RESPONSE.

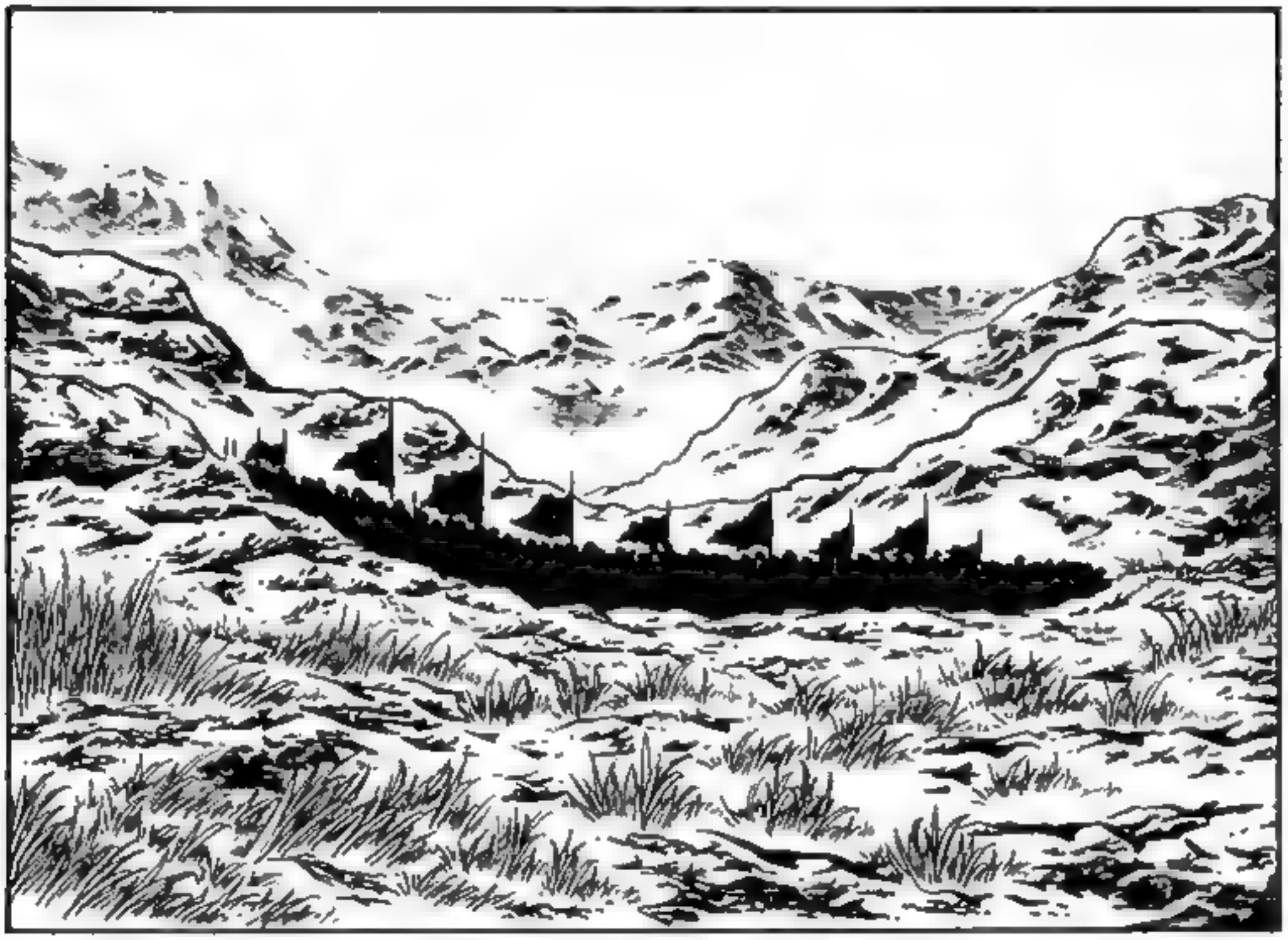
HAHA, THAT YUAN SHU MADE HIS MOVE MUCH FASTER THAN I HAD ANTICIPATED. TO THINK THAT HE WOULD MOBILIZE HIS ARMY AS SOON AS I ACCEPTED HIS GIFTS...

YES, SIR.

IN ANY CASE, TELL XUANDE HE CAN REST ASSURED THAT I WILL LEND A HAND.



THE FLAGS 淮南 READ HUAINAN



YES, IT APPEARS SO.
I BELIEVE THAT IS LU BU'S ARMY UP AHEAD, GENERAL JI LING.

IN ANY CASE, WE CAN'T MARCH ONWARDS WITH THEM IN THE WAY. SET UP ENCAMP-MENTS FOR THE TIME BEING.

HE SHOULD HAVE ACCEPTED MY LORD'S GIFTS, JUST WHAT IS HE DOING HERE...?

HAHAHA.

IT'S AN INVITATION TO A BANQUET.
BROTHER, WHAT DOES LU BU'S LETTER SAY?

AND DOES BROTHER REALLY PLAN TO ATTEND?
HE SAYS HE WISHES TO DISCUSS SOMETHING.

AN INVITATION?

BROTHER!? DON'T TELL ME YOU STILL TRUST LU BU!

I SEE NO REASON TO TURN DOWN HIS OFFER.

IF LU BU FELT LIKE IT, HE COULD EASILY CONQUER XIAOPEI AND KILL ME. HE IS NOT THE TYPE TO RESORT TO SUCH TRICKERY, ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE IS NO NEED FOR HIM TO DO SO.

HOW CAN YOU STILL TRUST HIM AFTER WHAT HAPPENED WITH XUZHOU!?

EVEN IF BROTHER FEELS THAT WAY, I SHAN'T BELIEVE THAT SCUM'S LIES!

I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SOMETHING HE WISHES TO URGENTLY DISCUSS.

ZHANG FEI, WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?

HMPH!

STOP BEING FOOL-ISH!

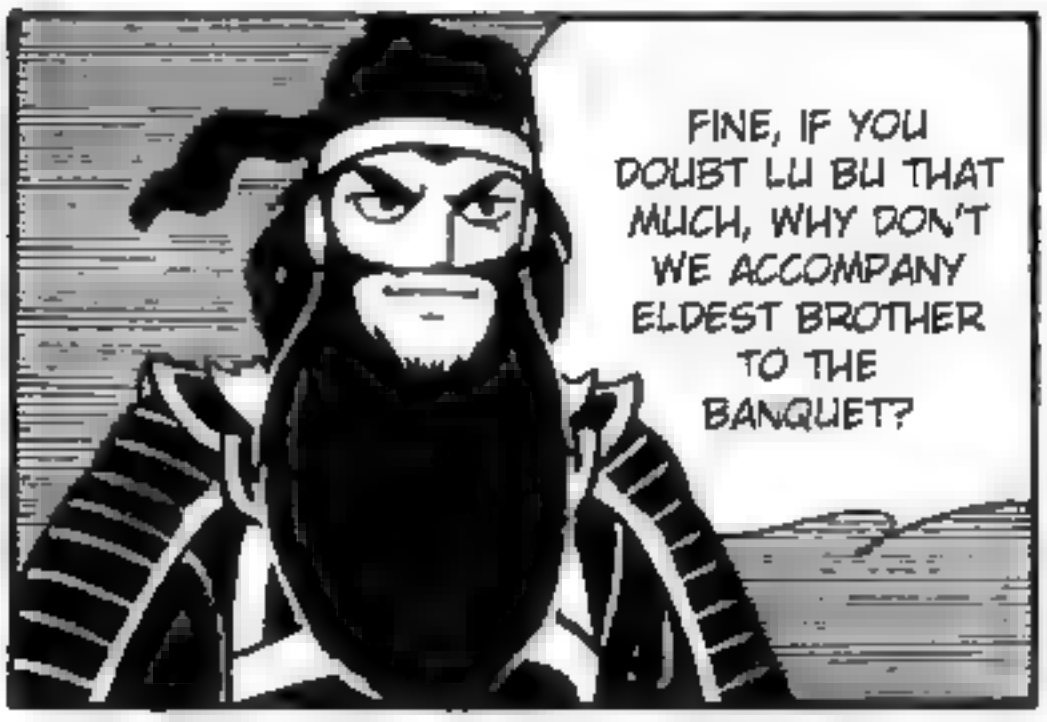
TO HAVE LU BU COME OUT FROM HIS CASTLE AND BE OPENLY SETTING ENCAMPMENTS OUTSIDE IS A MOST FORTUITOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR US. I SHALL LAUNCH A SURPRISE ATTACK AND TAKE LU BU'S HEAD! AND WHILE I'M AT IT, I'LL TAKE JI LING'S HEAD AS WELL.

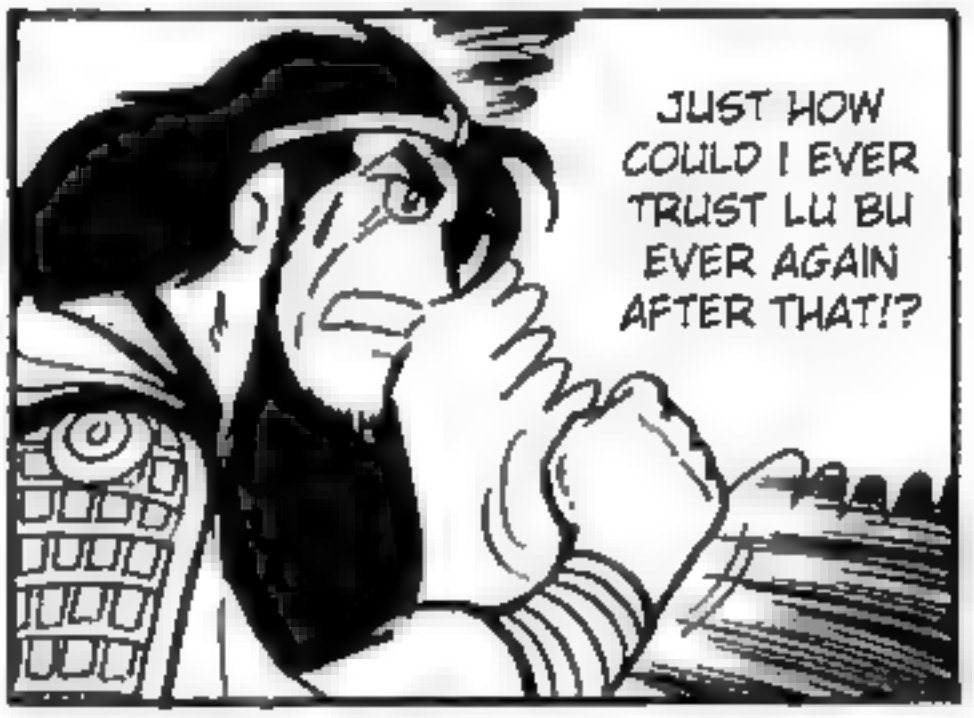
GUAN YU, STOP HIM!

DON'T TRY TO STOP ME! I JUST CANNOT TRUST THAT LU BU NO MATTER WHAT!

ZHANG FEI!

THAT NIGHT WHEN LU BU BETRAYED US AND STOLE XUZHOU FROM MY DRUNKEN SELF IS STILL FRESH IN MY MEMORIES.


FINE, IF YOU DOUBT LU BU THAT MUCH, WHY DON'T WE ACCOMPANY ELDEST BROTHER TO THE BANQUET?


JUST HOW COULD I EVER TRUST LU BU EVER AGAIN AFTER THAT!?

IF HE SHOWS EVEN THE SLIGHTEST MOVEMENT TO RAISE SUSPICION, I SWEAR I'LL CUT OFF HIS HEAD RIGHT THEN AND THERE.

FINE, LET US DO THAT THEN!

AH, THANK YOU FOR COMING, XUANDE.

?

PLEASE, COME THIS WAY. I HAVE A PERSON TO INTRODUCE TO YOU.

JI LING, THIS IS LIU BEI OF XIAOPEI.

LIU BEI, THIS IS GENERAL JI LING OF YUAN SHU'S ARMY.

STOP! I ASK THAT BOTH SIDES PLEASE CALM THEMSELVES DOWN.

MY QUESTION, EXACTLY!

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS LU BU!?

RECONCILE!?

I'VE CALLED YOU GENTLEMEN HERE TODAY TO HAVE YOU RECONCILE WITH EACH OTHER.

DO YOU NOT EVEN KNOW SUCH A SIMPLE WORD?

RECONCILE? IT IS A VERB THAT MEANS "TO HARMONIZE OR SETTLE, AS IN A QUARREL OR A DISPUTE."

JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY RECONCILE...?

I HAVE BEEN ORDERED BY MY LORD TO LEAD AN ARMY OF 100,000 AND TAKE LIU BEI'S HEAD.

THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKES!

WHAT!? WELL, AREN'T YOU QUITE DELUDED!?

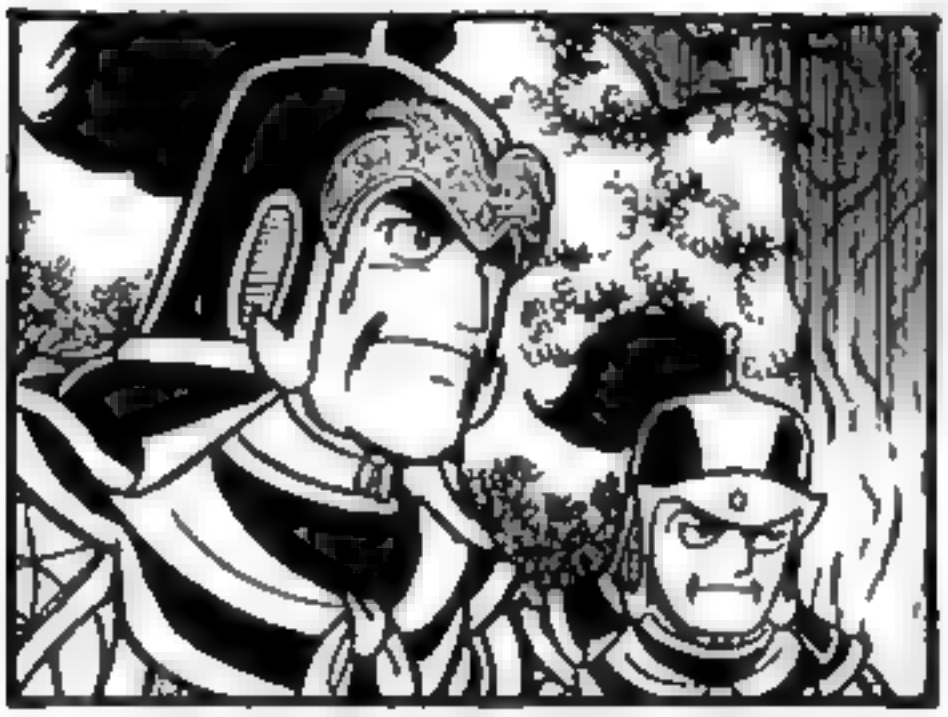
THIS IS NO MERE MOCK FIGHT! I *CANNOT* JUST DISOBEY MY LORD AND WITHDRAW MY TROOPS AFTER COMING THIS FAR!

WHAT!?

IF YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN TAKE MY BROTHER'S HEAD, THEN GO AHEAD AND TRY! I'LL BE SURE TO SEND YOUR HEAD FLYING BEFORE YOU CAN EVEN DRAW YOUR SWORD!

YOU! BRING ME MY SPEAR!

SILENCE!!!



?

IT IS NOT I WHO WILL TELL YOU TO RECONCILE WITH EACH OTHER, IT IS THE HEAVENS!

?

?

TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THAT.

IF THE ARROW HAPPENS TO HIT THE SPEAR, THEN CONSIDER IT AS HEAVEN'S WILL AND CALL A TRUCE!

I SHALL TRY TO AIM FOR THAT SPEAR WITH MY BOW.

BUT IF THE ARROW WERE TO MISS, THEN YOU MAY DO WHATEVER YOU WISH.

I SEE... LU BU MUST NOT WANT TO HELP LIU BEI BUT IS GUILTY ABOUT DOING SO BECAUSE LIU BEI HAS HELPED HIM OUT IN THE PAST. BUT BY DOING THIS, HE CAN SHIFT THE BLAME ON THE HEAVENS AND NOT FEEL GUILTY ABOUT REJECTING LIU BEI'S REQUEST FOR REINFORCEMENTS...

NO MATTER HOW SKILLED LU BU IS, THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD HIT THAT SPEAR FROM SO FAR AWAY...

GOOD.

FINE, I SHALL AGREE. IF THE ARROW HITS THE SPEAR, I SHALL CONSIDER IT AS A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAVENS AND WITHDRAW MY FORCES.

BRING ME SOME WINE.

WHAT DOES IT MATTER? IF IT IS TRULY HEAVEN'S WILL, THE ARROW WILL HIT ITS MARK NO MATTER HOW DRUNK LU BU IS.

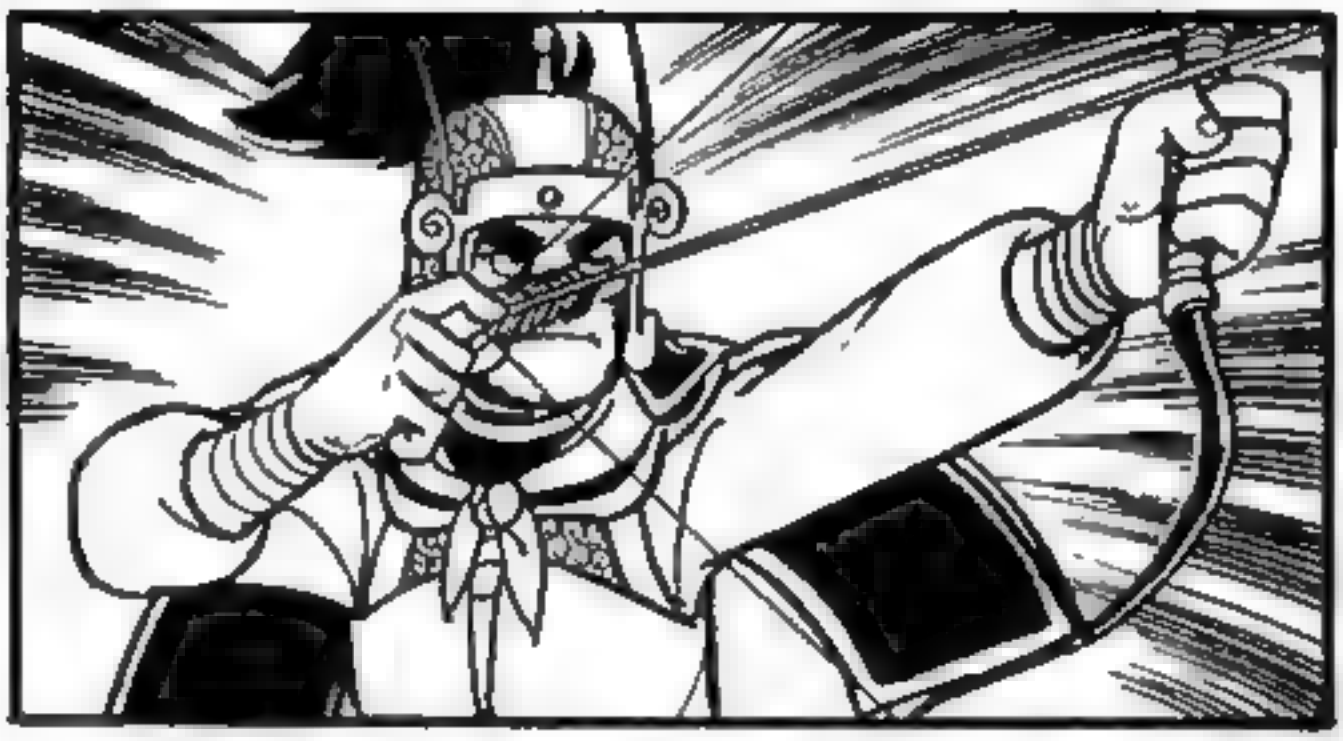
WHAT!? ARE YOU PLANNING TO SHOOT WHILE YOU'RE DRUNK!?

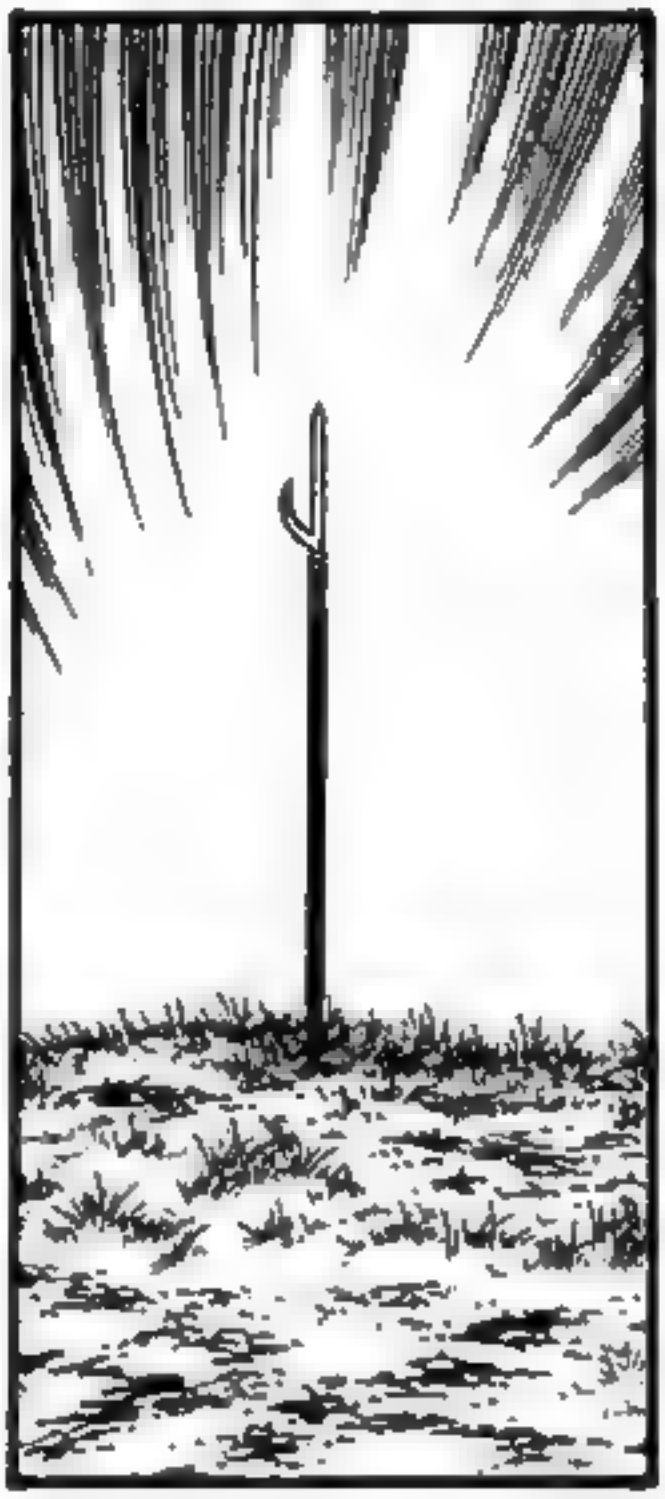
BASTARD... IS HE PLANNING TO MISS ON PURPOSE...?

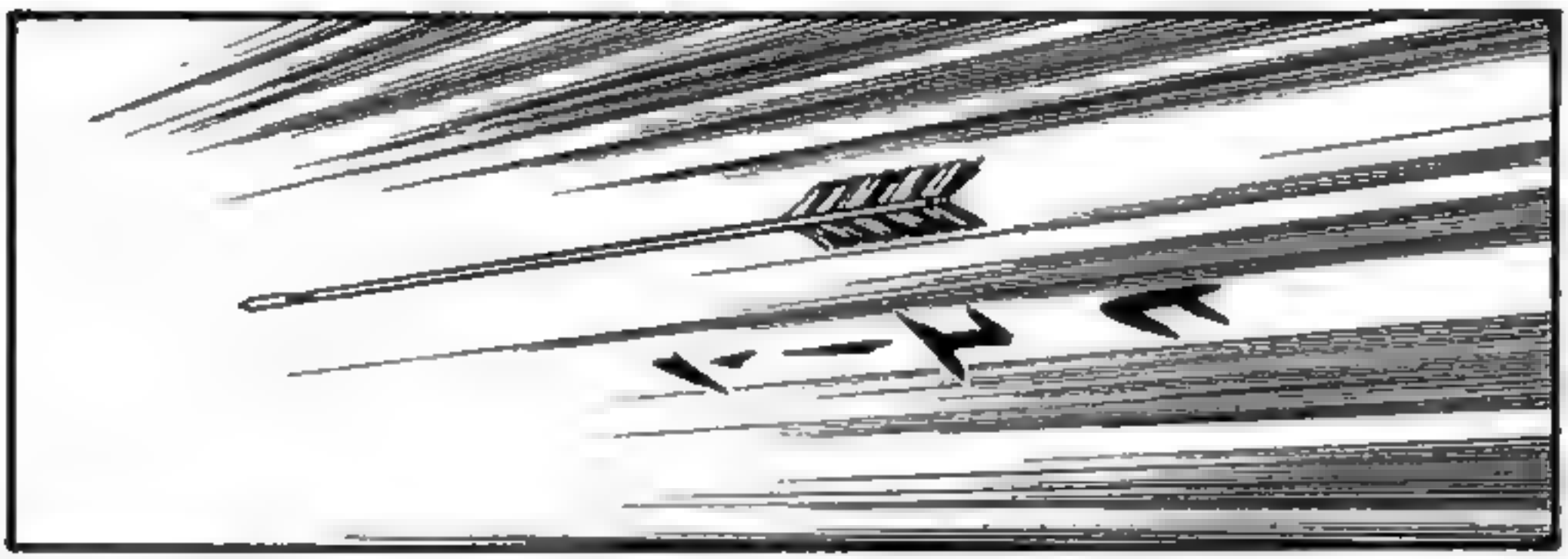
NOW THEN, I'LL HAVE A GLASS TO CALM MY NERVES.

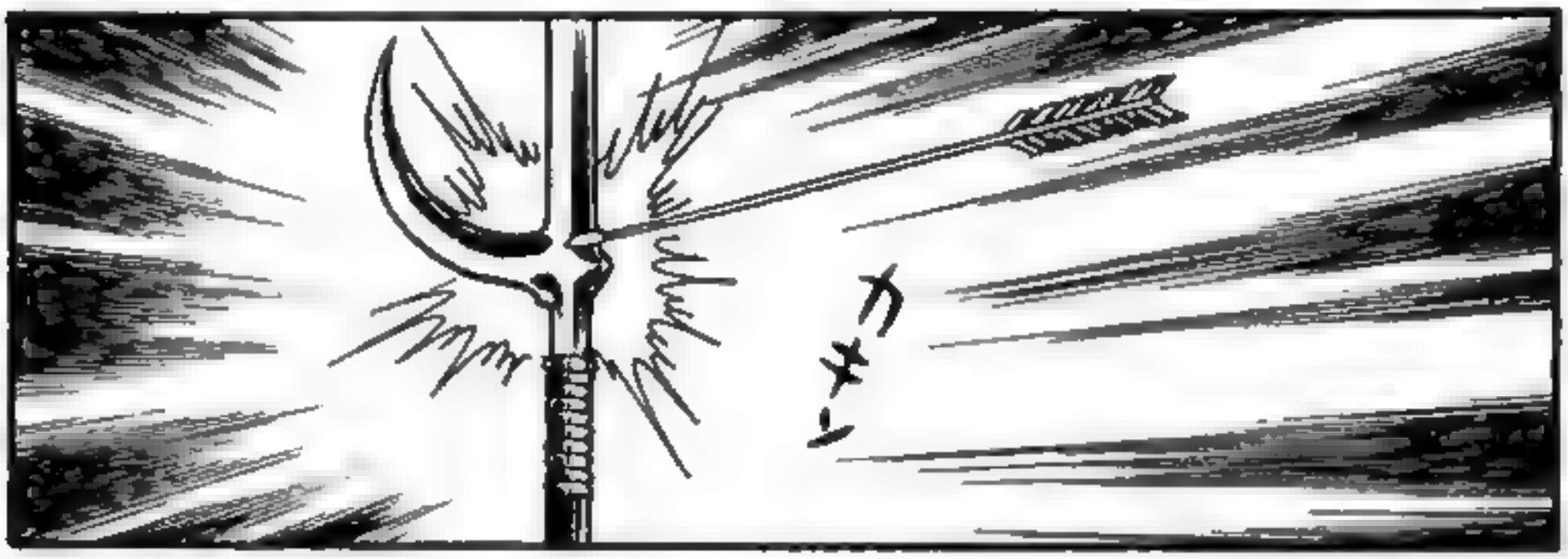
AHHH...

ALRIGHT, HAND ME MY BOW AND ARROW.









W-WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, LU BU!?

AH!

AHHH!

AH, NO BUT...

HMM? DO YOU PLAN TO GO AGAINST HEAVEN'S WILL?

ALRIGHT, LET'S HAVE A TOAST FOR PEACE!

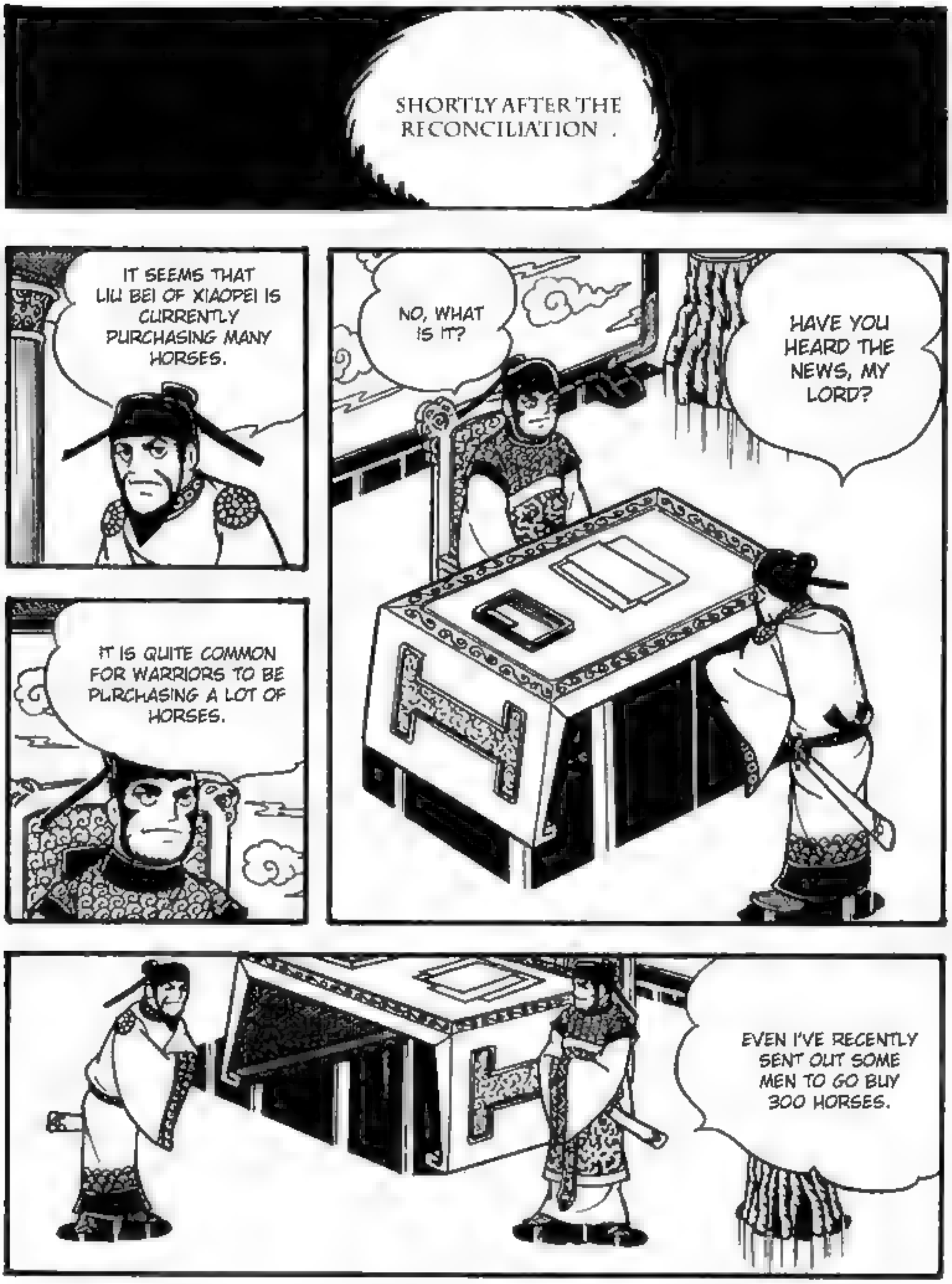
THEN RECONCILE WITH LIU BEI AS PROMISED.

HOW JOYOUS THIS IS, TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE WITHOUT SHEDDING A DROP OF BLOOD! LET US DRINK TO PEACE!

I'VE HEARD THAT LU BU WAS JUST A WILD BOAR WITH ALL BRAWN AND NO BRAINS... BUT TO THINK THAT HE COULD COME UP WITH SUCH A PLOY...!

HMPH, THIS DOESN'T MEAN I'LL FORGIVE YOU FOR XUZHOU...!

HORSE THIEF


SHORTLY AFTER THE RECONCILIATION .
IT SEEMS THAT LIU BEI OF XIAOPEI IS CURRENTLY PURCHASING MANY HORSES.
IT IS QUITE COMMON FOR WARRIORS TO BE PURCHASING A LOT OF HORSES.
NO, WHAT IS IT?
HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS, MY LORD?
EVEN I'VE RECENTLY SENT OUT SOME MEN TO GO BUY 300 HORSES.

THE SERVANTS YOU SENT OUT TO BUY HORSES CAME BACK JUST NOW TO REPORT THAT THEY'VE BEEN ROBBED.

WHAT IS IT AT THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING?

MY LORD!

YOU FOOL! JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE PAID FOR!? HOW COULD YOU JUST COME BACK EMPTY-HANDED LIKE THIS!?

YES, SIR.

YOU SAY YOU WERE ATTACKED BY HORSE THIEVES!?

YES, SIR...

IS IT NOT YOUR JOB AS A GUARD TO FIGHT OFF ANY BANDITS OR THIEVES!?

THEY WERE MASKED AND THEIR LEADER WAS A BRUTE WHO MADE QUICK WORK OF MY MEN. HE WAS NOT A MAN WE COULD EVEN APPROACH WITH OUR LEVEL OF SKILL.

BUT IN MY DEFENSE, THESE HORSE THIEVES WERE NO ORDINARY THIEVES OR BANDITS. THEY WERE ALL HIGHLY TRAINED AND ORGANIZED.

AND WE WERE ABLE TO STEAL A GLANCE AT THE FACE OF THE HORSE THIEVES' LEADER.

AND WHO WAS HE?

YES, AND...?

AFTER WE WERE ROBBED, WE SECRETLY TAILED THEM BY FOLLOWING THE HORSE TRACKS.

WHAT!?

HE WAS LIU BEI'S YOUNGER BROTHER, ZHANG FEI.

NO, MY LORD! I AM CERTAIN THAT IT WAS ZHANG FEI WITHOUT A DOUBT!

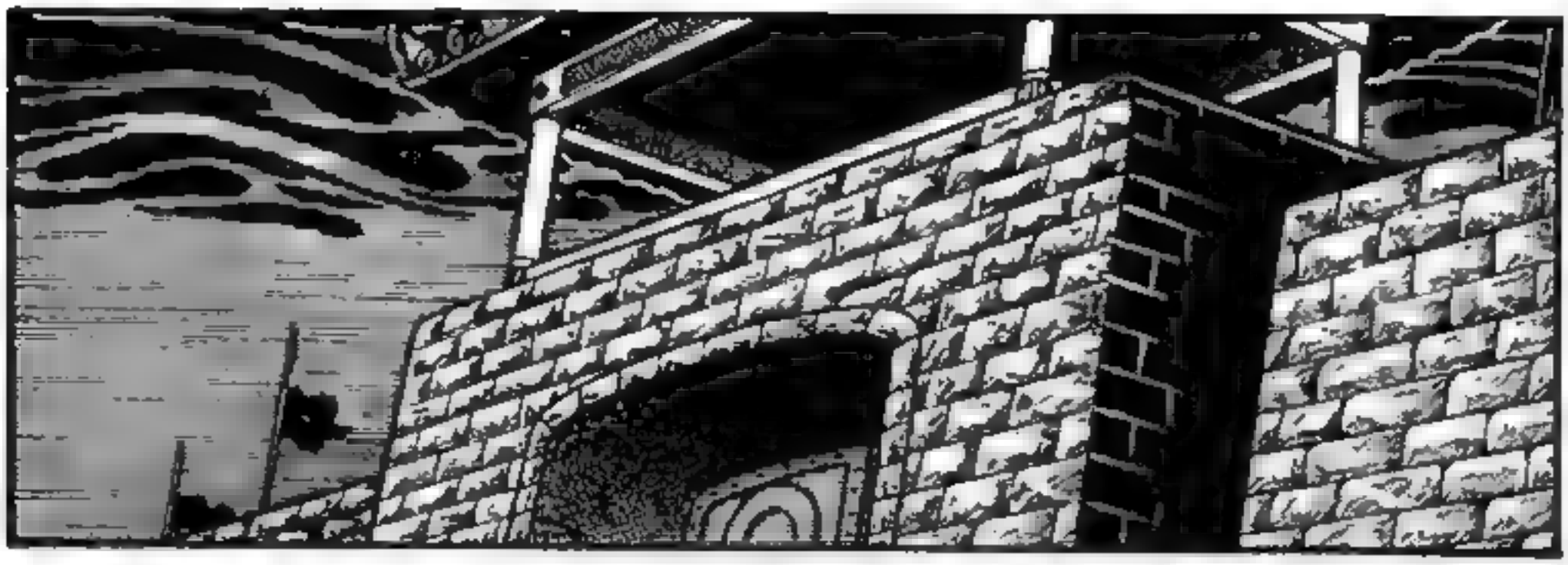
ARE YOU JUST SPOUTING THIS NONSENSE TO SAVE YOUR OWN SKIN!?

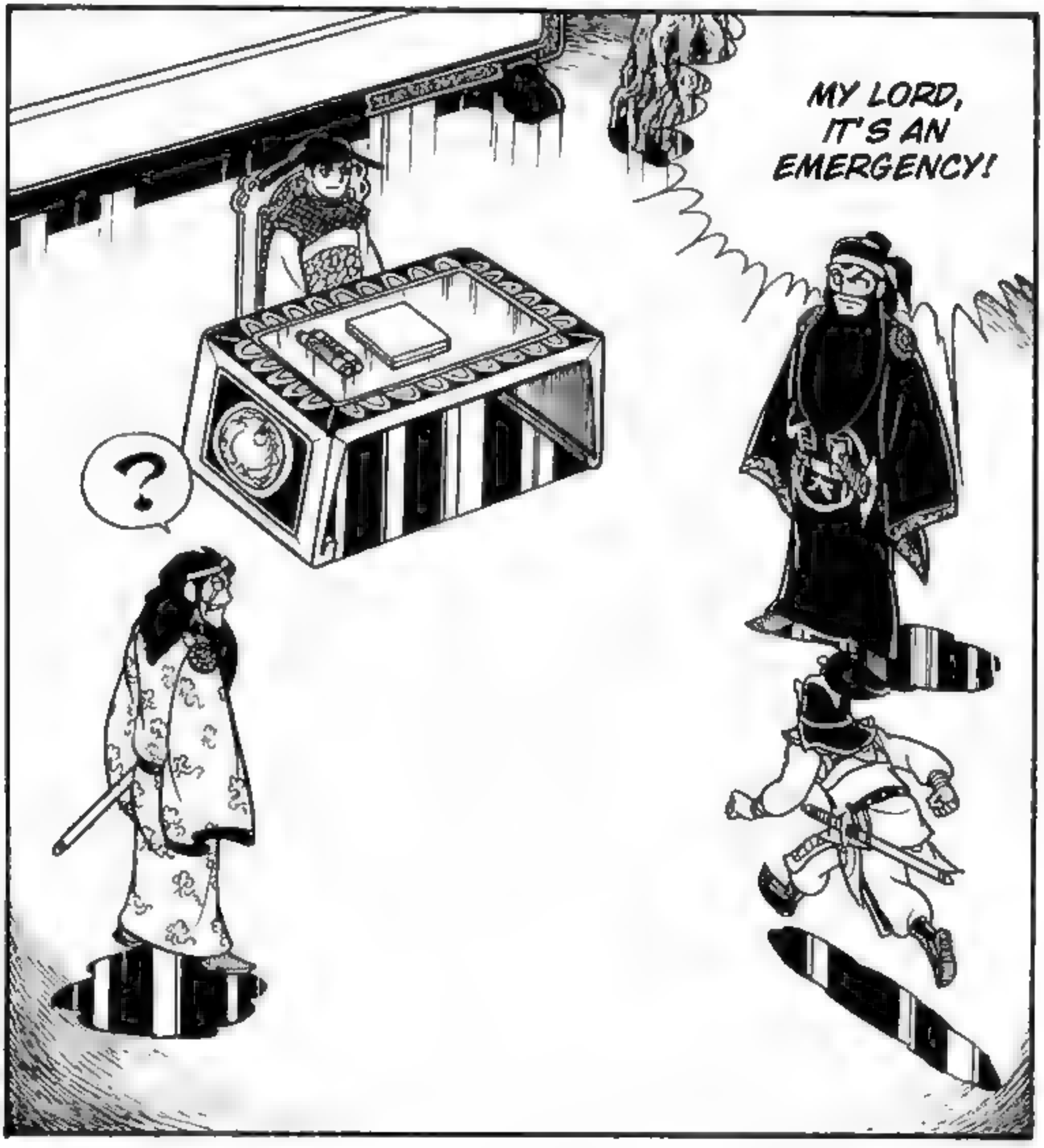
I SAW HIS FACE CLEARLY WITH MY OWN TWO EYES.

DAMN HIM...!

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, LIU BEI WAS SUPPOSEDLY PURCHASING A LOT OF HORSES RIGHT NOW.

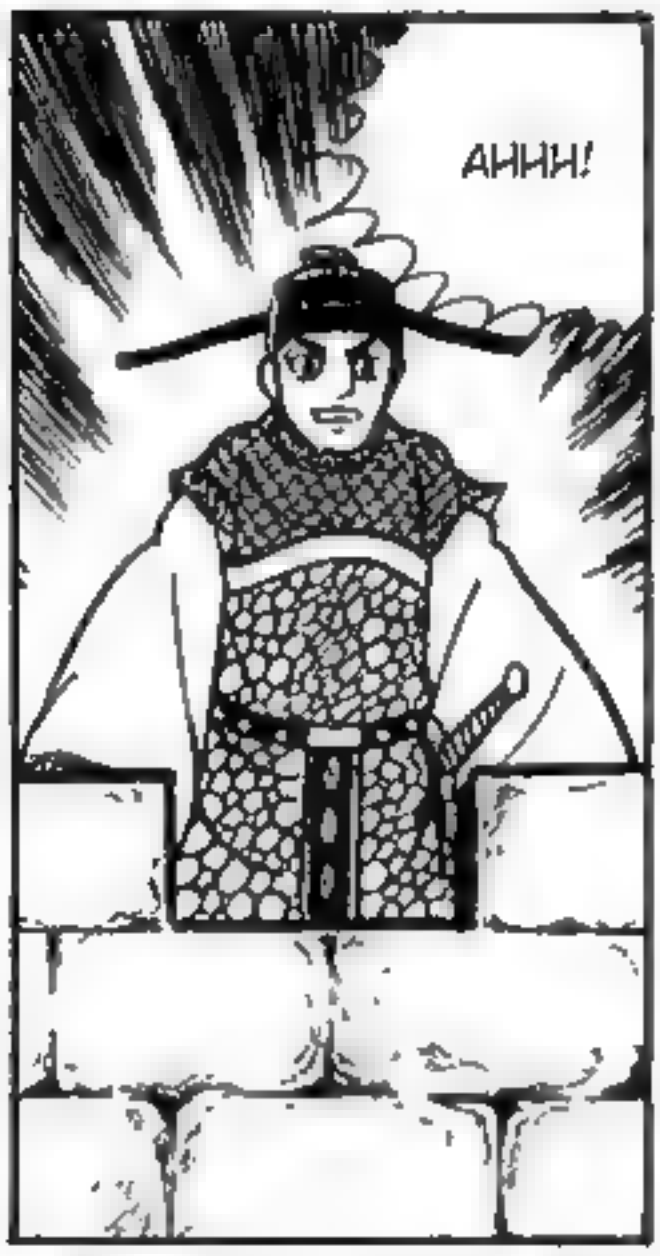
MOBILIZE THE TROOPS TO XIAOPEI! I SHALL KILL THAT UNGRATEFUL THIEF!



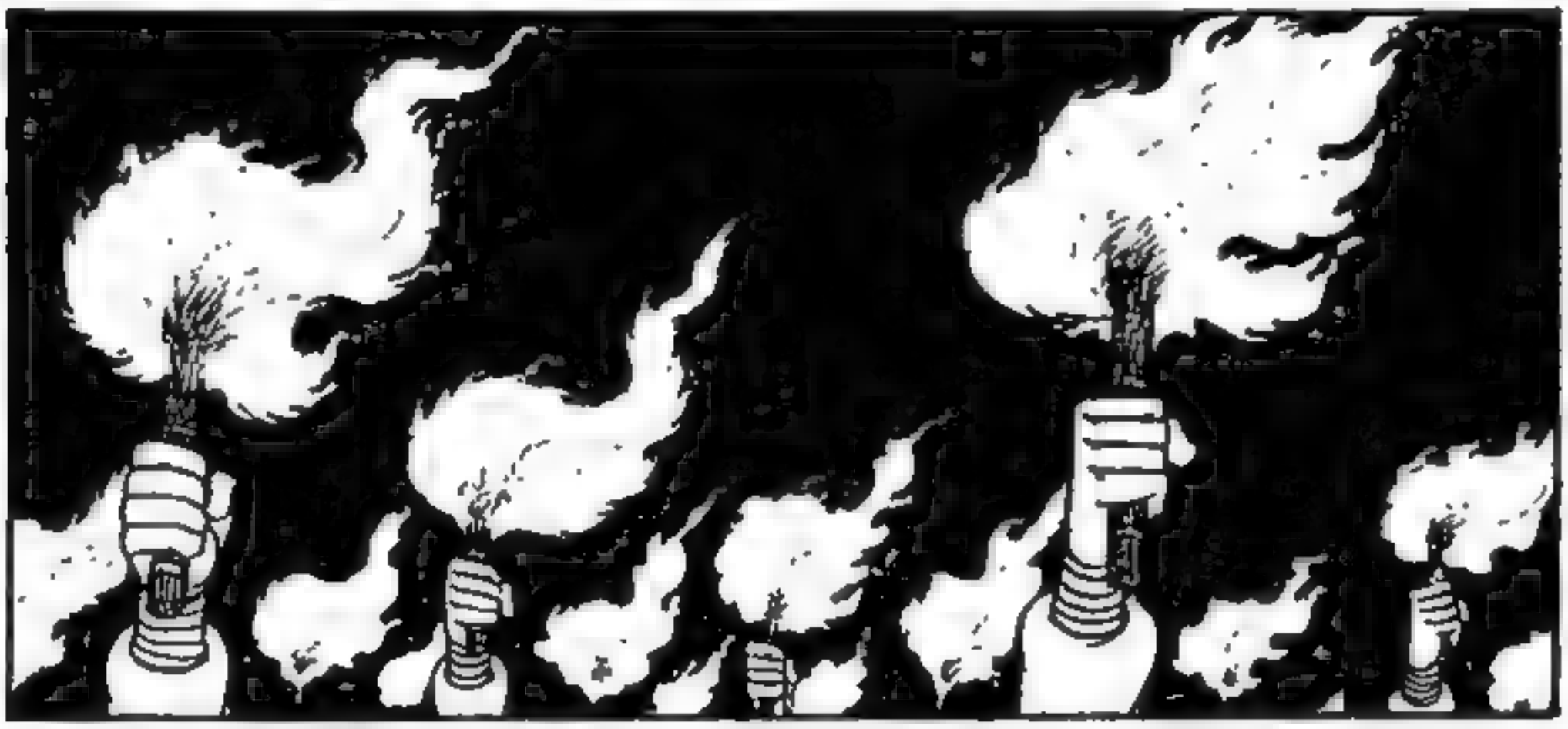

MY LORD, IT'S AN EMERGENCY!
?

WHAT!?

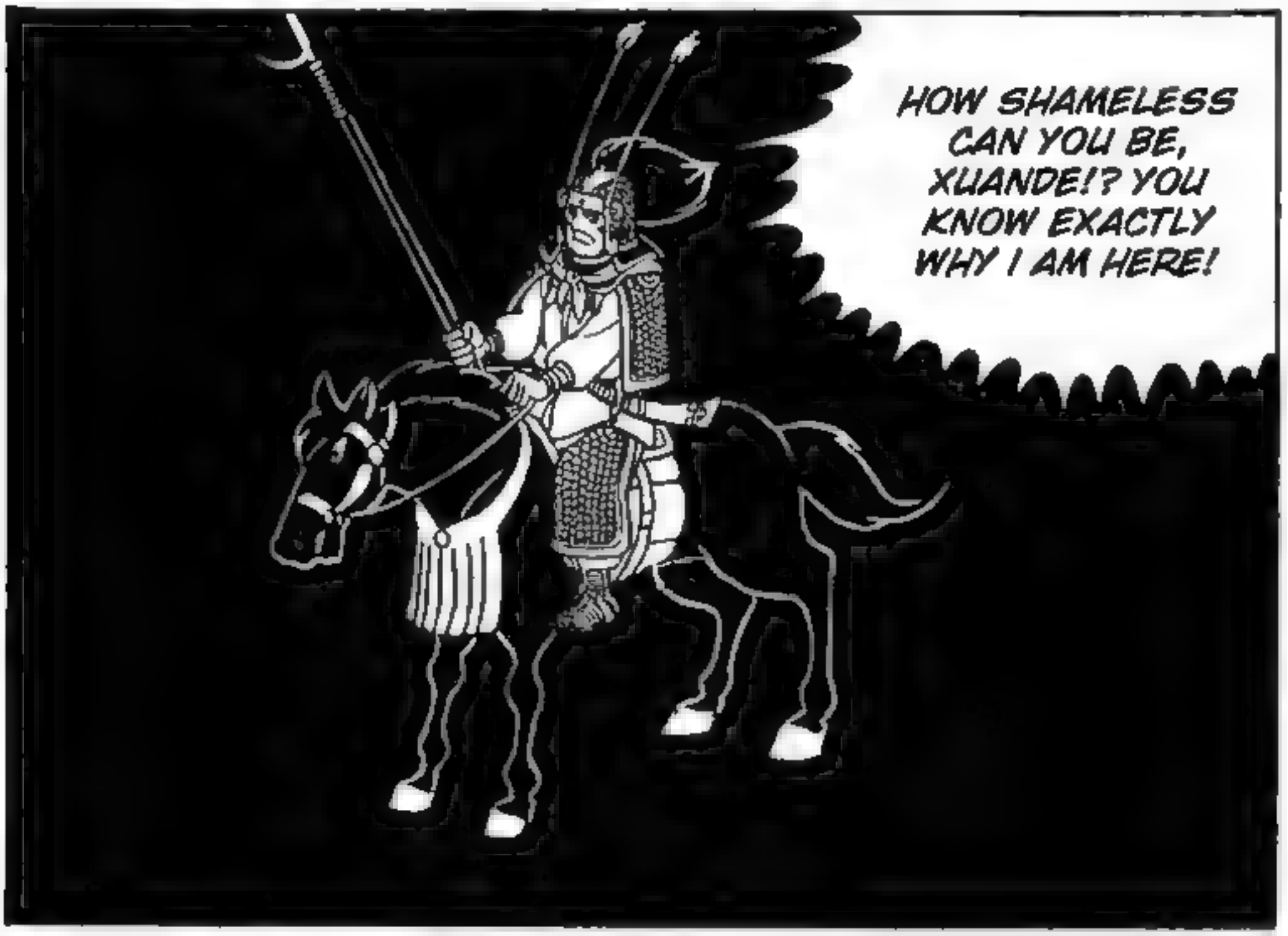
LU BU HAS COME WITH AN ARMY OF HIS OWN TO ATTACK XIAOPEI!


AHHH!

WHY WOULD LU BU SUDDENLY...



LU BU! WHY HAVE YOU SUDDENLY COME TO ATTACK ME!?


HOW SHAMELESS CAN YOU BE, XUANDE!? YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHY I AM HERE!

?

BETRAY...!?

HOW COULD YOU BETRAY ME LIKE THIS AFTER I PROTECTED YOU FROM YUAN SHU!?

ZHANG FEI!

ARE YOU STILL TRYING TO FEIGN IGNORANCE!? I KNOW THAT YOU HAD YOUR BROTHER ZHANG FEI STEAL MY HORSES!

I DID NOT STEAL THOSE HORSES FROM YOU. I MERELY HAD YOU RETURN OUR HORSES BACK.

LU BU! I BELIEVE YOU'RE A LITTLE MISTAKEN IN YOUR ACCUSATIONS.

IT IS ONLY RIGHT FOR THE RULER OF THESE LANDS TO OWN THESE LANDS' HORSES AS WELL!

THE LANDS OF XUZHOU RIGHTFULLY BELONG TO MY BROTHER!

THE REAL THIEF HERE IS YOU, LU BU!

HOW CAN YOU CALL ME THE THIEF WHEN IT IS YOU WHO STOLE XUZHOU FIRST!?

NGGHHH!

ATTACK!

BROTHER XUANDE, I KNOW YOU TOLD ME THAT A DRAGON BIDES ITS TIME BENEATH A POND FOR THE RIGHT TIME TO SOAR INTO THE SKY, BUT...

I'M TELLING YOU I DIDN'T STEAL THEM, I *RETRIEVED THEM!*

ZHANG FEI, DID YOU REALLY STEAL HIS HORSES?

BUT IT IS NOT FAIR FOR BROTHER TO LOWER YOUR HEAD TO THAT SCUM BECAUSE OF MY MISTAKE OF LOSING XUZHOU TO HIM!

WE'VE SWORN AN OATH TO DIE TOGETHER ON THE SAME DAY SO LET US FIGHT BRAVELY UNTIL THE VERY END!

FINE, I WON'T SAY ANY MORE. WHAT'S DONE IS DONE.

THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR BROTHER TO HASTILY RUSH TOWARDS DEATH.

PLEASE WAIT, ELDEST BROTHER. WE TWO HAVE BEEN BIDING OUR TIME AS WELL AND IT IS TIME I THINK WE SPRUNG INTO ACTION.

BUT...

BROTHER XUANDE, ZHANG FEI AND I CAME TO SERVE YOU BECAUSE WE BELIEVED YOU TO BE A MAN WITH GREAT POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THIS WORLD FOR THE BETTER.

ZHANG FEI AND I SHALL FIGHT WITH LU BU'S FORCES. IN THE MEANWHILE, BROTHER SHOULD FLEE TO XUCHANG.

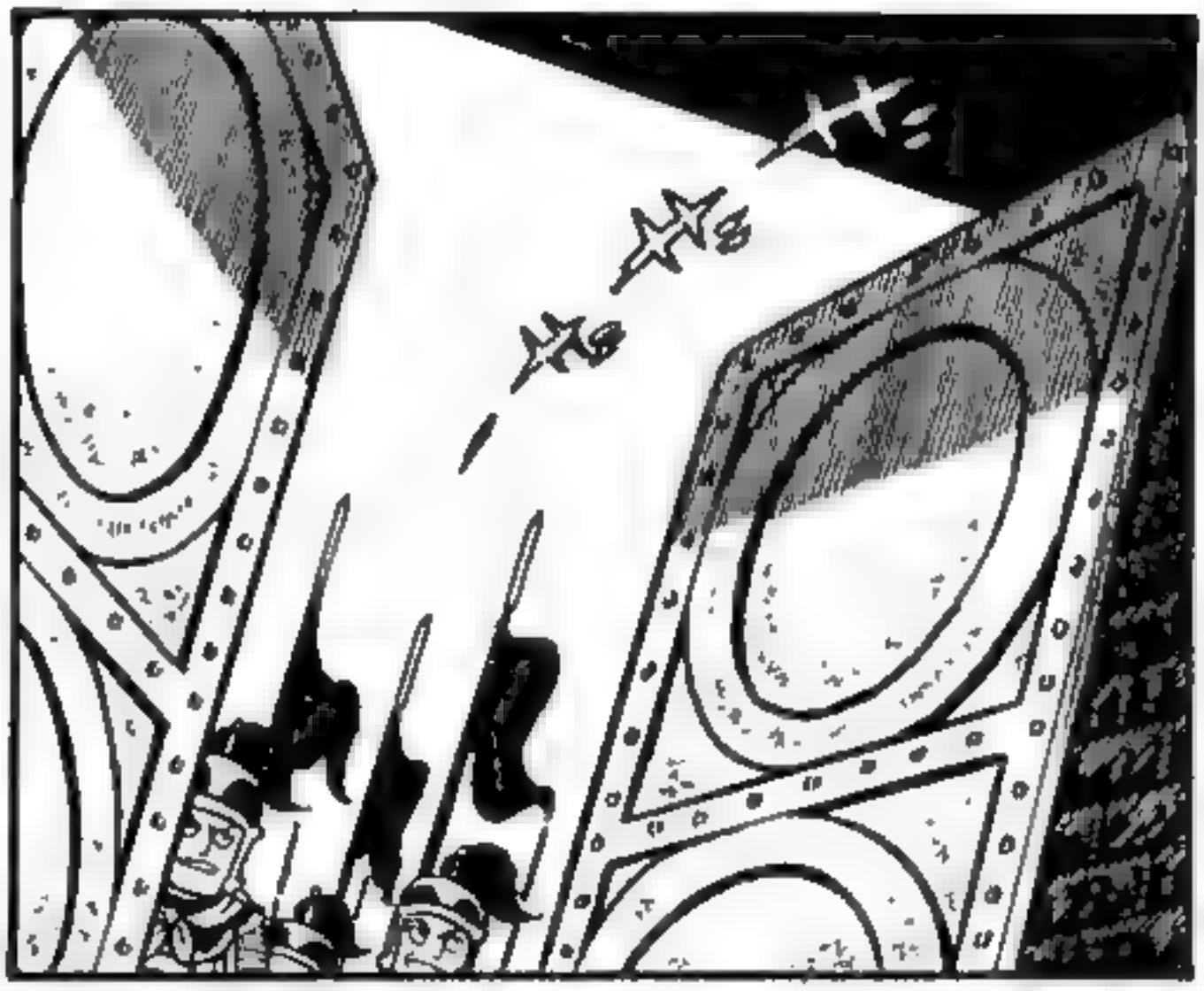
IF YOU WERE TO DIE HERE, THEN ALL THE THINGS WE'VE GONE THROUGH TOGETHER IN THE PAST WILL BECOME MEANINGLESS.

JUST PROMISE ME TO COME BACK ALIVE.

SO PLEASE, SAFELY ESCAPE WHILE ZHANG FEI AND I DRAW LU BU'S FORCES AWAY.

WE SHALL GO OUT TO MEET THE ENEMIES NOW!

CHARGE!



YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I'VE WANTED TO CUT OFF LU BU'S HEAD!

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS DAY SO LONG...!

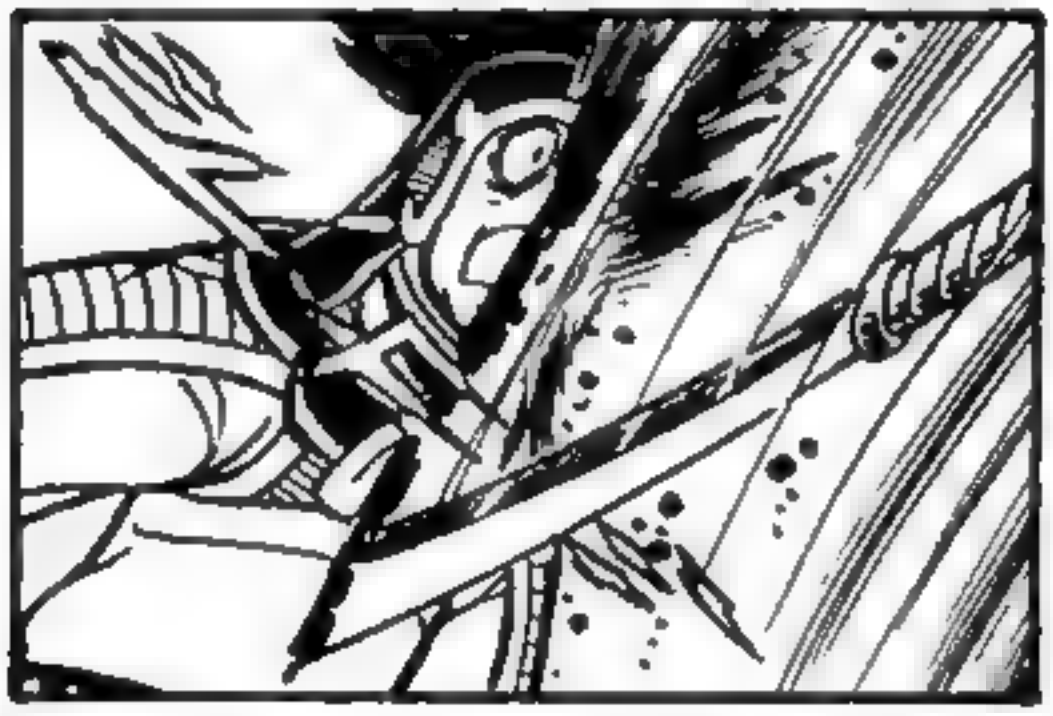
COME AT ME, IF YOU WISH! I'LL KILL ANYBODY WHO GETS IN MY WAY!

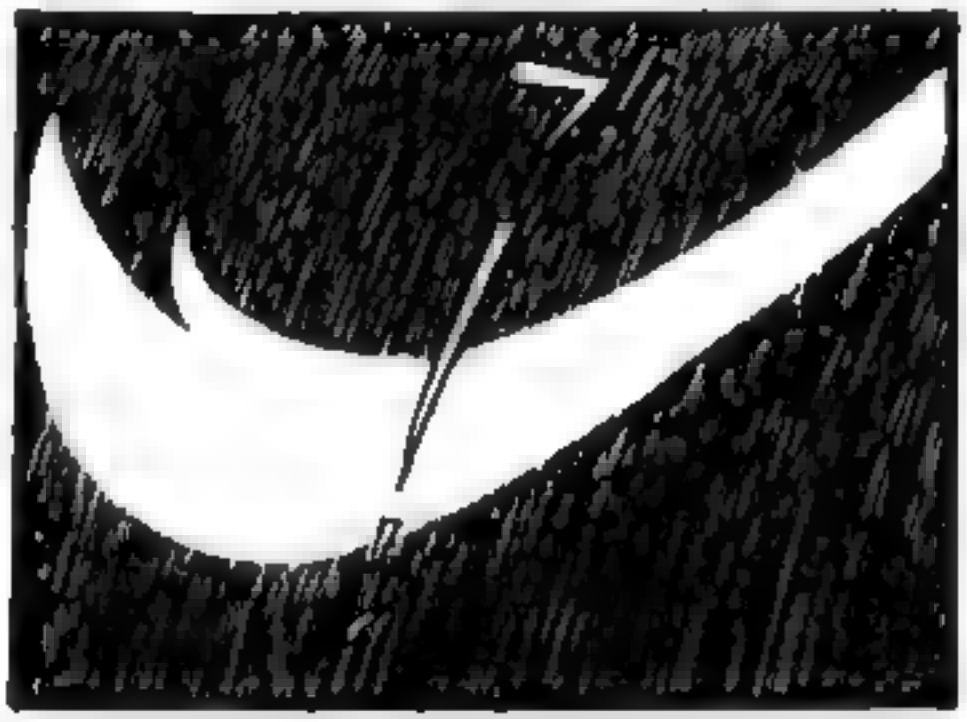
LU BU! COME
OUT AND
FIGHT ME!!!

THAT'S THE LEADER OF THE HORSE THIEVES! KILL HIM!

I SAID, GET THE HELL OUT OF THE WAY!

OUT OF THE WAY, YOU MAGGOTS WOULDN'T EVEN BE ABLE TO GIVE ME A PROPER FIGHT!





ZHANG FEI'S RAGE WHICH HAD BEEN BOILING FOR SOME TIME HAD, AT LAST, EXPLODED LIKE A VOLCANO

THE SOLDIERS OF LU BU'S ARMY WERE TERRIFIED BY SUCH FEROCITY

MY RAGE CANNOT SUBSIDE UNTIL I TAKE YOUR HEAD!

LU BU! WHERE ARE YOU!?

COME OUT AND FIGHT ME, YOU COWARD!

AGHHH!

HELP!

ZHANG FEI!

THAT'S ENOUGH, IT'S TIME TO RETREAT.
WHAT IS IT, GUAN YU?

BUT I STILL HAVEN'T TAKEN LU BU'S HEAD!

RETREAT!?

DON'T BE STUPID! JUST LOOK HOW FAR YOU'VE COME INTO ENEMY TERRITORIES!

BUT...!

ONCE THE ENEMIES REGAIN THEIR COMPOSURE AND REGROUP, IT'LL BE US WHO'LL BE IN DANGER!

WE MUST RETURN BACK TO BROTHER XUANDE NOW!

YOU'VE RAMPAGED ABOUT ENOUGH!

AS REGRETTA-BLE AS IT MAY BE, I MUST RETREAT FOR NOW...

BROTHER GUAN YU IS RIGHT...

CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY, LU BU...!

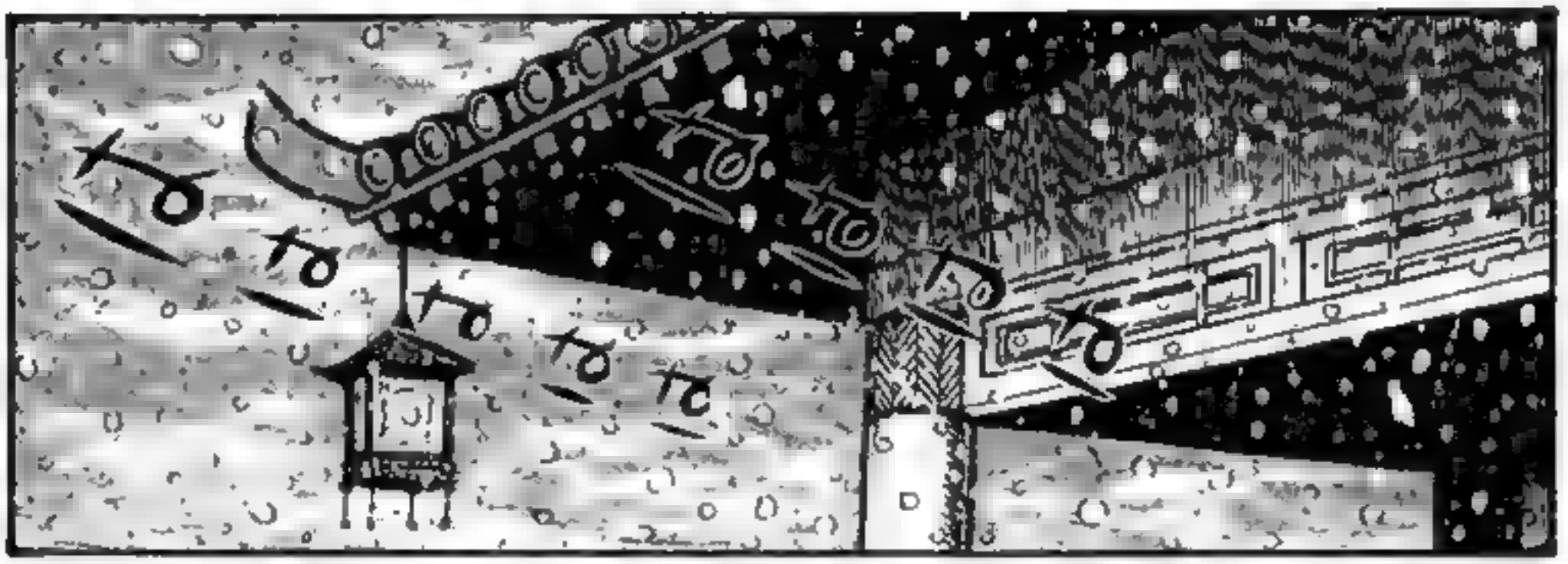
XUC HANG

WHAT? LIU BEI HAS COME TO SEEK SHELTER HERE IN XUCHANG?

YES, SIR.

GIVE HIM A WARM WELCOME FOR THE TIME BEING.

HMM...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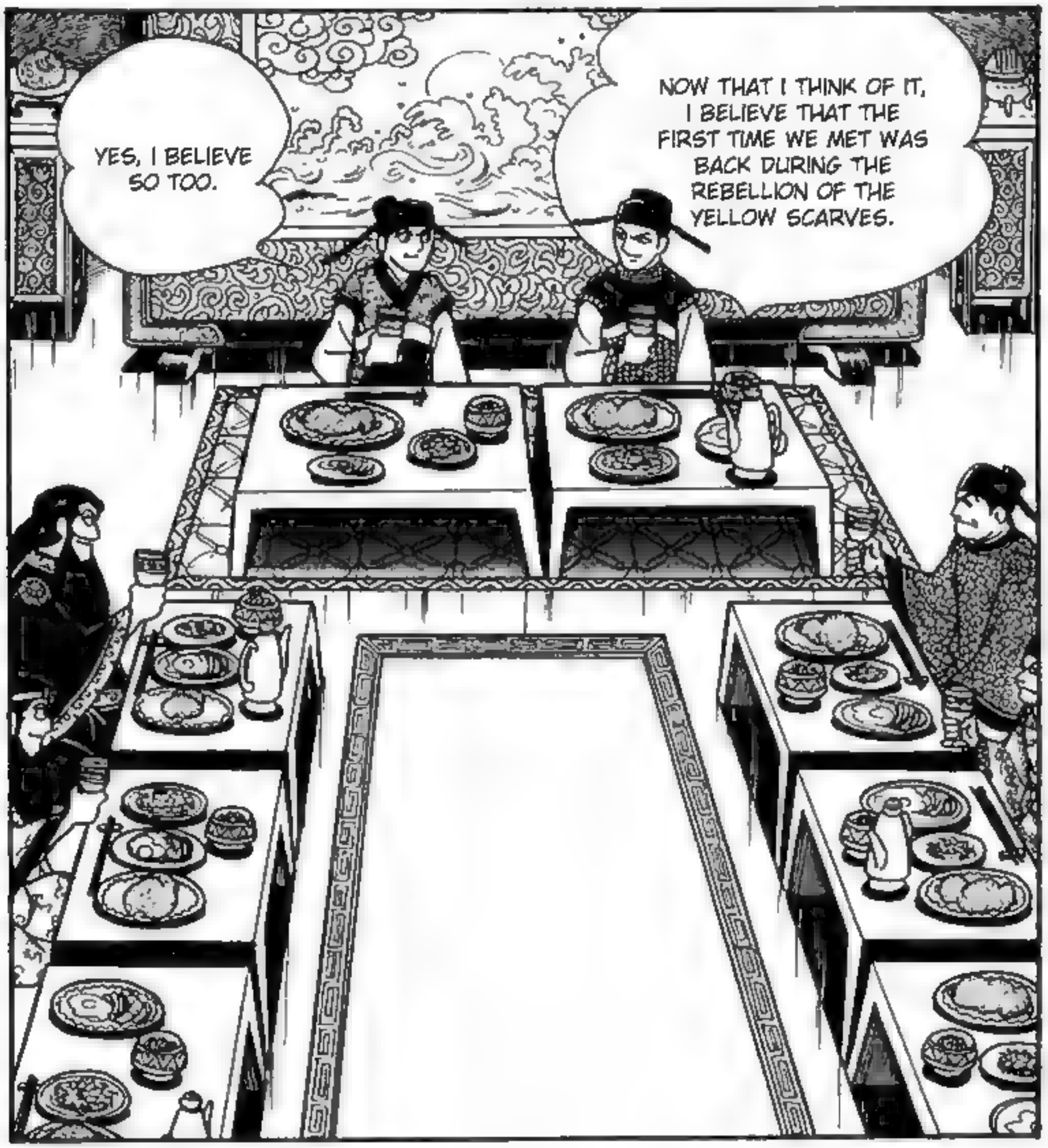
YES, I BELIEVE SO TOO.
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, I BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST TIME WE MET WAS BACK DURING THE REBELLION OF THE YELLOW SCARVES.

YOUR VOLUNTEER ARMY WAS MOST IMPRESSIVE BACK THEN. EVEN MY HIGHLY TRAINED SOLDIERS SPOKE QUITE HIGHLY OF THEM.

I... HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.

BY THE WAY, WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO FROM NOW ON?

I SEE...

I'LL HAVE TO PONDER ABOUT IT AFTER IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

I'M NOT SURE WHETHER I SHOULD CONTINUE TO WANDER AROUND,

OR FIND SOME PLACE TO SETTLE DOWN...

THANK YOU FOR THE COURTEOUS WELCOME, CHANCELLOR CAO CAO.

NO, IT WAS REALLY NOTHING. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK THIS CAO CAO IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU.

YES...

THAT LIU BEI IS AS IMPRESSIVE AS THE RUMOURS SAY.

I BELIEVE IT MAY BE WISE TO DEAL WITH HIM NOW BEFORE HE GROWS TO BE A BIGGER THREAT...

HE WILL SURELY BECOME QUITE POWERFUL IN THE FUTURE. HE MAY EVEN TURN OUT TO BE A MOST INCONVENIENT OBSTACLE FOR MY LORD'S ASPIRATIONS.

NO, I OBJECT TO THAT OPINION.

ASSASSINATING HIM COULD LEAD TO UNWANTED RAMIFICATIONS.

UNLIKE BEFORE, LIU BEI'S NAME HAS BECOME BETTER KNOWN AMONG THE PEOPLE.

THE PEOPLE MIGHT DOUBT AND LOSE RESPECT FOR SIR. THEY MIGHT EVEN SPREAD RUMOURS OF HOW YOUR CAUSE IS UNJUST AND THAT SIR IS A MENACING TYRANT.

YES, I AGREE...

HMM...

A MOST WISE DECISION, MY LORD.

I THINK I WILL RATHER TREAT HIM WELL FOR THE TIME BEING.

WHAT? THE EMPEROR HAS BESTOWED UPON ME THE POSITION OF YUZHOU'S GOVERNOR?

YES.

CHANCELLOR CAO CAO SUGGESTED TO HIS HIGHNESS THAT IT WOULD BE A WASTE FOR A MAN SUCH AS SIR TO WANDER THESE LANDS AIMLESSLY AND HIS HIGHNESS AGREED.

MOREOVER, THE CHANCELLOR ALSO WISHES TO GIFT SIR WITH 3000 SOLDIERS AND 10,000 CARTS OF GRAIN.

I BELIEVE SIR'S REPLY WILL PLEASE THE CHANCELLOR AS WELL.
PLEASE TELL THE CHANCELLOR THAT I WILL GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT AND THAT I AM INDEBTED TO HIM.

THANKS TO CAO CAO, LIU BEI WAS ABLE TO FIND A NEW HOME IN YUZHOU AFTER BEING DRIVEN OUT OF XUZHOU. HE AND HIS NEW ARMY MARCHED ONWARDS TO YUZHOU WHILE SURROUNDED BY THE BITTER COLDNESS.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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三国志

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横山 光輝

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